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56th year of publication

Church in China faces many challenges

Alan Doerksen

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont. — The church in China is growing tremendously, but is continuing to face serious challenges including persecution, according to Dorothy and Freddie Sun, two Christians from China who now work with Christian Aid in North America.

Both of the Suns have been imprisoned and forced to do years of hard labor in China because of their faith. In 1984, Dorothy came to the U.S., where she was joined by her husband in 1988. Since 1987, they have worked with Christian Aid, an agency with offices in Fort Erie, Ont., and Charlottesville, Va.

Both the official church in China, called the Three-Self Patriotic Movement, and the underground church are facing big challenges, explain the Suns.

Freddie outlined the origins of the Three-Self church. When the Korean War broke out, in 1950, the Chinese Communist government wanted to cut all ties between "churches started by western missionaries and the mother church in the West.... They launched the Three-Self Patriotic [Movement].... Communists wanted to

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ALAN DOERKSEN

Freddie and Dorothy Sun, at a missions conference in Niagara Falls.

take over the leadership of the church. Several pastors opposed this and said the head of the church is only Jesus Christ, certainly not Communists. So they were put into jail."

How underground church began

Although "80 per cent of the pastors bowed down to the Communists," says Freddie, other Christians "turned underground. We withdrew from the registered

church.... That's how the house church movement started.

"Once you join the Three-Self, under Communist control, there are many messages you are not able to preach: not creation, because they say 'evolution'; not Jesus coming again, because they say 'Communism will win over the whole world.' You can't preach 'love your enemy' — you have to hate your enemy."

"Why do they call the registered church Three-Self?"

questions Dorothy. "Self-supported, self-governing, self-preaching." The title is pretty good, but they are never self-supporting — [pastors] are hired by the government, by the Chinese Communist Religious Bureau. All the benefits, all the salaries come from government.

"Second, they don't do any self-preaching. The government will point out who will be the senior pastor. Their manuscripts must be okayed by the Three-Self. It's not 'I got a message from the Lord and can freely preach.' Also, they never evangelize the people. The preaching area was determined. You cannot cross the province, county or city." Evangelism is against the law.

"Third, they are not self-governing," explains Dorothy, "because all the operations must be okayed by the government. This is why the true believers don't want to be registered."

But despite the Three-Self's control by Communists, Freddie notes, "in the lower level, many Three-Self churches are pretty good.... We see some very good Christians and pastors."

The Cultural Revolution was

even more repressive to the church, explains Freddie. "In the 1960s, even the Three-Self Church closed. All the pastors were sent to rural areas for re-education. So, no congregations, no pastors." That was from 1966 to 1976.

Dorothy notes that Christians in China are "all good citizens. They never fought back, never complained to the Communists. They endured the water and the fire trial. Even Communists recognized that." Even in the Tiananmen Square protest of 1989, "Christians were never involved," she says. "They just endured the pain by faith, with joy, even."

Blessing of persecution

The church in China has suffered severe persecution since the Communists took control. But Freddie asserts, "When the persecution came, we knew it was God's will. God used Communism to clean house, pave the way for Christianity to spread." Communists did not only repress Christianity, but also traditional Buddhism, idol worship and ancestor worship, he notes.

"Before Communism came, we See PERSECUTION page 2...

Evangelicals and Catholics challenged to common witness

Mary Wimberley

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — Three noted theologians, who have worked together on Evangelicals and Catholics Together (ECT) documents and as individuals on the topic of unity, shared thoughts and clarified the message of ECT in early October at Samford University in Birmingham, Ala. The two-day program was sponsored by Samford's Beeson Divinity School.

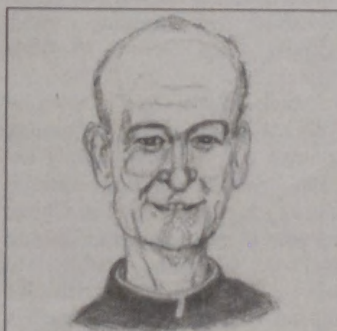
ECT has brought to the fore diverse issues of ecclesiology, the aspect of theology that deals with the doctrine of the church, acknowledged Richard John

Neuhaus, president of Religion and Public Life, during a session of "Pilgrims on the Sawdust Trail: Evangelical Conversations."

"Our Lord intended that there should be one everyday reality: Christ and his church. The scandal is that we aren't one. We are brothers and sisters, and we do not live as one," Neuhaus said.

Respondents were Beeson Divinity School dean Timothy George and Jeffrey Gros, associate director of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

Neuhaus traced the beginnings of the ECT movement to the early 1990s, when it was grounded in the



HARRY DER NEDERLANDEN ILLUSTRATION

Richard John Neuhaus

pro-life movement.

"We have already seen what can happen when Christians

converge in unity," he said.

An important part of the first ECT document in 1994 was the statement recognizing each other as brothers and sisters in Christ, Neuhaus said. "Many evangelicals had not been raised to think of Catholics in that way," he said.

Few Catholics oppose the work of ECT, Neuhaus said. "Being a Catholic is not so much about not being something else. It is the Catholic belief that the saving graces of God are by no means limited to the Catholic Church," said Neuhaus, citing action of the Second Vatican Council in 1962, which set forth that Christ and the

church are coterminous. "When someone is connected to Christ, they must be connected to the church because the body and the head can never be separated."

Christian unity necessary

Christian unity is necessary, he said, "because we are one. From the Catholic point of view, the goal of Christian unity is the full communion of all Christians."

In his view, the goal of ECT is not that everybody become Catholic, Neuhaus said. "ECT has no great plan for reorganizing any of the major religious institutions, but

See CATHOLIC page 8...

News

Persecution has been driving force of church in China

... continued from page 1

had less than one million Christians. Now, after 50 years of persecution, we have 100 million — 100 times greater than before because of the blessing of persecution. If you read the church's history, persecution has always been a driving force."

Government enemy #6

Since the Communist government's repression of the Falun Gong religious movement has been getting more attention, the government has also been putting more pressure on Christians, says Freddie. On the government's list of enemies, the Falun Gong cult is fifth, says Freddie, and the underground church is number six. The church is farther down the list because "we are peaceful. We are just preaching the Bible. We have no secrets."

"My nephew in Hong Kong

said, 'Uncle, you are on the lower part of the black name list.'"

But because of his agricultural development work in China, Freddie has actually earned the respect of Communists.

The Chinese government still jails Christians, "but now it's different from when they put us in jail 30 years ago," explains Freddie. "If you have money, you can [get] parole."

"Not in our time," says Dorothy. "In our time, they were really strict about changing our minds. They wanted us to give up our faith and [worship] Mao Tse-tung as a god."

"Now money talks," agrees Freddie. "It's not really Red China anymore. It's Green China, because of American dollars!"

Effect of Olympics

The coming 2008 Olympics are already having an effect on China,

and could affect Christians, suggests the Suns. On Nov. 10, China signed an agreement to officially join the World Trade Organization (WTO). "That means Communists acknowledge the failure of Communism," Freddie asserts. "The WTO is capitalist.... Once you open the door to trade, to investment, it's very hard for them to close the door again.... They need the foreign investment, so they need a lot of compromise." Communists may give more freedom to Christians, but Freddie asserts, "We do not have our eyes on the Communists. We have our eyes on God. If Communists say 'No,' we will go to China and evangelize anyway."

Democratic window-show

"No matter whether the Communists like it or not, they have to open the door," says Dorothy. "They have to make a beautiful

democratic window-show for the foreigners. Otherwise, foreigners will say, 'Hey, you do not have human rights. You are not qualified to open doors for the 2008 Olympics.'" She noted that Olympics VIPS recently visited Beijing to see if there was enough green space. "So, Beijing had to show them a huge area of grass and trees. They took a plane and had a birds-eye view. But they didn't know lots of part-time workers painted the ground green."

Freddie adds that he saw buildings in Beijing "repainted.... Only those facing the streets."

Killer and liar

Like Satan, the Communist government has two characters, suggests Dorothy: "Killer, liar. If you remember this, you won't be deceived." She recalls a high-ranking Communist leader who was asked by an American journalist, in 1989, how many students were killed in Tiananmen Square. "He said, 'Nobody. No single one.'"

Christians in Canada and the U.S. can help the church in China in a number of ways, say the Suns. "First, you can pray for us," says Freddie. Christians can also help provide Bibles and teaching materials. "All of these we need badly," he says. "We are upgrading Bible schools to seminaries." Also, "We

need American Chinese, Canadian Chinese who speak Mandarin to go to China."

House churches in China need more discipleship training, asserts Freddie. "House churches have problems because of lack of training, false teaching."

Remember the chains

Dorothy adds, "Please remember the chains" of persecuted Christians. She also warns, "Don't be deceived by the Chinese Communist so-called Christian Council" — because it reports there are just 20 million Christians in China, rather than 100 million, as the Suns state.

"The number of Christians in China outnumber the Communists now," observes Freddie. "The Communists are only 50 million."

"All the naive, trustworthy, American and Canadian great evangelists or very important pastors trust reports from the government, they don't trust us," says Dorothy. "They don't listen to the true story. This is why our heart is really hurting."

Christians in North America don't have to go overseas to do mission work, says Freddie, because so many international students come here. We can reach them with Christian love and friendship.

Chinese couple risks danger to work in China

Alan Doerksen

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont. — Although they spent many years in prison in China because of their faith, Dr. Freddie and Dorothy Sun travel there each year to help out the underground church. Freddie is the Director of the China Division for Christian Aid, an international agency which focuses on supporting indigenous mission work in countries beyond North America.

When asked if it is easy for them to get into China, Freddie says, "So far, so good."

He almost got caught

"Last year, he almost got caught," notes Dorothy. On his last trip to China, says Freddie, he was staying with a church elder in Inner Mongolia, when, "In the middle of the night, three secret police came to the place I was staying.... They knocked on the door and woke us up. They came for me because I was visiting many churches and Bible schools."

"I showed them my America passport, because we are Americans now. I said I'm coming to Inner Mongolia to see if I can help you with irrigation for farming. They wanted to search my bag, but the elder of the church prevented them."

Then, the secret police told him, "Oh, Mr. Sun, we come and protect you, because Inner Mongolia is not that stable." Freddie laughed: "They come and protect me in the middle of the night?"

He actually was visiting China to survey the possibility of starting a drip irrigation project on the edge



CHRISTIAN AID

Freddie Sun stands with a tractor imported to use on a drip irrigation project in western China.

of the Gobi desert. When the Suns travel to China, they get their visas from Hong Kong, not from mainland China. Although Hong Kong is now also under communist rule, Dorothy says that religious freedom there is "a whole lot better than on the mainland." But recently, they have received reports of Christian leaders in Hong Kong who feel threatened and pressured by the government.

Indigenous missionaries and church leaders have several advantages over foreign missionaries, explains Freddie, in an interview with *Christian Courier*. "They know the languages, they know the people, they don't need a visa, no culture shock." They can also get by on less support money than foreign missionaries need.

The Suns now run the China Division of Christian Aid. First of all, they focused on starting

fellowship groups among Chinese scholars at universities in North America.

Some of those developed into churches. But in 1990, the Suns started a new work.

"We started to go back to China every year ... to help build [Christians] up, for support, because training,

especially discipleship training, is very vital," explains Dorothy. "Without training, you can get 20,000 people saved in one day ... nationwide, but who will do the visiting and pastoring? This work is so important. So the mainland China ministry focuses on the establishing of training Bible schools. We support 70 Bible schools."

Much of the Sun's work in China is done secretly. "Training centres are 'underground,'" explains Freddie. Proper pastoral training is a great need in China, because there has been so little in the past 40 years, Freddie observes. The Suns help with this for several reasons: "There's such a hunger and thirst for God's Word," says Freddie. "Secondly, if we don't train them, a lot of false teaching appears. If we don't train, materialism will creep in."

Changes in China's religious policy imminent?

Paul Davenport

BEIJING (Compass) — The Chinese government may consider changes in its religious policy at a major religious affairs conference scheduled for late November, a senior Chinese house church leader confirmed in October.

Government officials in the Religious Affairs Bureau have reportedly approached several respected house church leaders to effect a rapprochement. These leaders have been asked to influence house church members to consider official registration and to drop what the government sees as their confrontational approach.

At least one leader, however, politely declined to co-operate, fearing that he would become a tool for government manipulation.

Several house church leaders report some easing of pressure since the summer. Possible reasons include China's joining the World Trade Organization and Beijing's obtaining the right to host the 2008 Olympic games, they said.

The Chinese government has also softened its attitude towards the Vatican after Pope John Paul II publicly apologized on October 24 for past mistakes made by Roman Catholic missionaries in China.

Although the Vatican's continued recognition of Taiwan is still a major sticking point, Beijing's conciliatory response is in marked contrast to the hostile rhetoric it employed last year when the pope canonized 120 Chinese Catholic martyrs on China's National Day (October 1).

With a new feeling of conciliation abroad, the results of the forthcoming government conference on religious affairs will be awaited with great interest by Christians both inside China and abroad.

News/Politics

Government decision to settle residential school cases upsets churches

Ferdie Baglo

VANCOUVER (ENI) — A federal Canadian government decision to settle legal claims of abuse at Indian Residential Schools has been met with surprise and distress by four Canadian churches — even though the government has agreed to shoulder more responsibility.

After more than a year of discussions between churches and the federal government, the settlement proposed by the government in late October was decided without church input, church leaders complain.

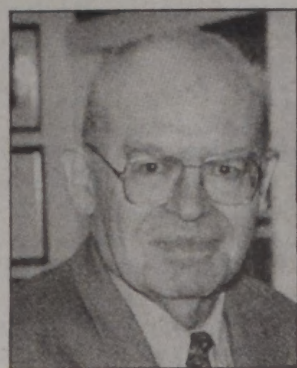
Deputy Prime Minister Herb Gray, the head of a government team negotiating with the churches, announced on Oct. 29 that the government would pay 70 per cent of the compensation

destined for 1,000 former students of the now-defunct church-run federal institutions.

Churches would need to pay \$300 million

The offer could apply to thousands more former students who allege sexual, emotional, physical and cultural abuse at the schools, administered by four Canadian denominations on behalf of the Canadian government from 1820 to 1969. The cost is expected to be about \$1 billion, which, according to the government-proposed settlement, would leave the churches responsible for about \$300 million.

In at least one case, a court set financial liability for the government at only 40 per cent, leaving the church in question to bear the major burden. Although the recent



Deputy Prime Minister Herb Gray

government offer takes more responsibility, churches involved in the cases were worried by what they called the unilateral nature of the government's decision.

Learning to live with greater danger

I grew up with my father's stories of the Second World War. Cyprus was not a major scene of battle and, as a British crown colony, it escaped German occupation. But it was briefly bombed by the Germans and Italians in 1940 and '41, and it seemed possible that invasion would follow. My father was around ten years old at the time, the fifth of seven children. When the bombers would approach, his family would often hide within the thick Venetian walls surrounding the medieval city of Famagusta. This afforded them sufficient protection from the dangers raining down from above.

Among his stories included more than one brush with death, the most dramatic of which saw a bomb fall into his school the very day he had uncharacteristically decided to play the truant. Growing up, as I did, in a time of unparalleled prosperity in the wealthiest country in the world, I was fascinated by my father's stories.

War seemed far away

For North Americans war always seemed far away — on the other side of the globe, involving people who looked and spoke unlike us. Indeed at home Canadians and Americans have sought to create a society in which as many elements as possible of risk and danger are eliminated. We now have laws mandating the use of seat belts and child safety seats in automobiles. We have tried to make it difficult for people to begin or to continue smoking because of the health hazards associated with the practice.

Changing standards of legal liability have prompted fast-food restaurants to place warnings on coffee cups cautioning patrons that their hot beverages are, after all, *hot* and thus a potential threat to, shall we say, their epidermal integrity. The old adage *caveat emptor* ("let the buyer beware") has been replaced with myriad laws and regulations governing the production of a huge variety of consumer goods, all of which are subject

Principalities & Powers

David T. Koyzis

to recall if they prove defective in some manner. We have sought to insulate ourselves against even the ordinary risks associated with walking to the corner store or changing a light bulb.

None of this is in itself bad, of course. I would never wish to rescind the decades of progress made in the enactment of consumer protection laws or to leave the option of installing of seat belts to the whims of car manufacturers. I wouldn't want to have to be on guard every time I considered buying a toy or item of clothing for my daughter.

Adding another brick to a fortress

At the same time, such otherwise laudable efforts may leave us with a smug sense of entitlement — that we somehow have a *right* to expect to live in comfort, shielded from the normal perils of living. We have been lulled into thinking that all catastrophes can and should be prevented, that we can pin blame somewhere for everything that goes awry, that we can pass another law that will stave off a recurrence of the tragic or merely inconvenient. In this way we will make ourselves more perfectly secure, having added another brick to a fortress carefully constructed to keep out the chaotic uncertainties of a harsh world.

The events of September 11 have changed all that. Unlike my father, I have no war stories to tell my daughter. But she will grow up in a North America different from the one we thought we knew until two months ago. We will simply have to learn to live with the greater risks and dangers, conscious that our very lives and health are ultimately gifts of God's grace.



David T. Koyzis teaches political science at Redeemer University College, Ancaster, Ontario.

Anglican Archdeacon Jim Boyles, chair of the ecumenical team that has been negotiating with the government, said that although the government's offer was "a reasonable first step," the settlement did not address many issues, including allegations of cultural abuse and how the churches could pay their share "in an orderly manner that would not cripple their ongoing social programs."

Urging government to negotiate

The four churches that form the ecumenical team — the Anglican, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic and United churches — are urging the government to return to the negotiating table. They say the solution should take into account both the ongoing needs of Aboriginal communities and the need to find alternative ways for some church organizations to meet their financial obligations.

One Anglican diocese in British Columbia will cease operation on December 31 because it can no longer finance the cost of litigation. The Anglican Church of Canada (ACC) has been selling off assets to meet the national church's estimated \$100,000 monthly legal bills.

Churches have pointed out that money set aside for legal costs has not helped make amends to those harmed by abuse at the schools.

Paying lawyers, not survivors

Canada's biggest church, the United Church of Canada (UCC), has been "spending between two and three million dollars yearly, mostly for legal costs — it is not going to the survivors," Brian Thorpe, pastor and senior adviser to the UCC's Residential Schools Committee, told ENI.

Thorpe said that because of the centralization of UCC's organization and because it had run fewer residential schools than other churches involved in the cases, the church was named in fewer than 10 per cent of the claims. "We are

fairly confident that we can continue to meet our legal obligations for the foreseeable future," Thorpe said.

Truth and reconciliation

In a statement issued after the government-announced settlement last week, the UCC said: "We would be encouraged by this recent statement from the Deputy Prime Minister if, in addition to addressing the immediate claims against Canada and the church, he had clearly tied the addressing of such claims to a process which would enable truth to be told and reconciliation to be sought."

Thorpe said the churches would like a public inquiry into the affair that would be shaped in part by the interested parties, including Aboriginal people.

Sister Marie Zarowny, chair of the Catholic Organizations Task Group for Indian Residential Schools, told ENI the government's settlement proposal was not thorough enough. "Our proposal was looking at a more long-term comprehensive solution."

Discussions between the government and the ecumenical negotiating group have focused on determining the apportionment of liability between the government and churches. This has frustrated survivors whose claims have meanwhile hung in limbo.

Gray said that the government took its decision to take the majority of the responsibility because the views of the churches and government were still far apart and it was unfair to keep plaintiffs waiting while protracted talks went on.

Still, the churches are concerned that some of the church organizations involved will be unable financially to meet 30 per cent of the responsibility.

Meanwhile, Thorpe said, the number of plaintiffs had risen and continued to grow.

While more than 8,000 individuals have ongoing claims, it is estimated that some 105,000 people attended residential schools.

Food..? For Thought..??

We are not primarily, nor equally, responsible for someone else's condition and actions. But as members of Christ's Body and as fellow citizens, we are **all co-responsible** for each other's well being!

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Guest Editorial

Rationalizing radical evil

The following is a guest editorial; it appeared in a recent issue of the Dutch periodical, *Trouw*. For another reflection on "moral equivalence" see Prof. John Bolt's article on the Acton website: www.acton.org

Gerrit Manenschijn

I have been following with rising disbelief the unfolding of ethically colored reflections on the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11 on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon. At first there was general outrage at the unimaginable horror of a terror that claimed more than 6,000 victims. But these were soon followed by relativizing accounts telling us not to be carried away by our emotions but to look for rational explanations. As if rationality and reasonableness were the proper framework by which to render the absolute evil committed by the terrorists understandable....

Like a punch in the face

Such inconceivable barbarity hits like a punch in the face. Immanuel Kant said that the only good in this world is an unconditionally good will. Then evil would be an unconditionally evil will. This is what was at work on Sept. 11. The

terrorists willed, planned and executed the evil that they did. An unconditionally evil will triumphed....

Time to take radical evil seriously

One cannot cancel out the evil committed by one party with the evil committed by another. This would be to pile up evil on evil, to create a growing mountain of wickedness. It is time to take radical evil seriously.

But there are those who equalize all evil. They paint all believers and all religionists as malevolent. This process began as soon as the first outrage at Sept. 11 ebbed....

The prototype is an editorial which begins by saying that "of course" one condemns the attacks but then goes on to put the unplanned and unintended victims of the bombings in Afghanistan on the same level as the victims of the planned and willed attack on America.... Nothing is cheaper than to condemn terrorism as a matter "of course". It is an ethically and politically correct reaction. "Of course" we are all against criminality, hunger, poverty, exploitation and discrimination.

Everyone? In Ramallah, Palestine, men, women and children cheered and praised Allah at the success of the attack.... Let's not put on rose colored glasses. Instead of speaking soothing words, let the experts on Islam in our midst explain why the new terrorism – terrorism that is suicidal, that deliberately selects innocent victims – is carried out almost exclusively by fundamentalist Muslims....

[The moral equalizers] argue that every religion and every ideology carries within itself the seed of terrorism: Judaism, Christianity and even atheism. There is some truth in this; Judaism and Christianity have both had their zealots who wished to speed the coming of the Kingdom of God. And the two terror systems of the 20th century, national socialism and communism, were atheistic.... But there's a difference. Quakers were never guilty of terrorism; nor were the followers of Menno Simons.... Every religion and worldview may contain the seed of terrorism, but some much more than others. If we erase this difference, we equate the mutual antagonism between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland with the slaughter of 6,000 innocents by suicidal terrorists.

By doing so we cancel the radical evil with the lesser. We do the same thing when for the umpteenth time we cite the misdeeds of the past, such as the crusades, slavery and colonialism. Or when we describe the conflict between Israel and Palestine as an instance of terrorism, forgetting that the number of Islamic victims of fundamentalist Muslims in Algeria is ten times larger.

Other commentators don't hesitate to brand globalization as a worldwide evil that threatens to destroy the culture of the Middle East, concluding that actually America called this attack

down on itself.

An example of this is the interview in *Trouw* with Bram van de Beek, a theology prof at the Free University, who takes on globalization and the commercialism of American culture. Without argument or proof, he blames globalization for all the exploitation around the world. It is no coincidence, he says, that radical Muslims, with different values than the West, exert the strongest resistance: "They feel 'America' threatening their culture and don't know how to stop it. Why does a child strike out? Out of powerlessness and frustration. This is also true of Bin Laden and his followers. I am sympathetic to their resistance to globalization, although I condemn the means; nevertheless, to resist globalization without resorting to violence is very difficult. To tell the truth, on Sept. 11, amidst ambivalent feelings, the thought struck me: 'At least something is happening, no matter how awful!'"

[The author cites other examples of commentators who point to America's misdeeds as the equivalent of terrorism.]

Cheap moralism

[These critics] peddle a cheap moralism that seeks to explain away radical evil by painting all believers and religions with the same brush. But this doesn't explain; it conceals. Those who equalize evil sanction it.

What is behind this move? The only reason I can think of is the misplaced fear of discrimination. This is the unforgivable sin of our time.... But if we fear that telling the truth is discrimination, we lose our ability to discern. Then we lose sight of the fact that Sept. 11 was not just an attack on America and the American way of life but above all on our humanity....

Progress report

Harry der Nederlanden

I have received a number of inquiries from readers how my cancer treatment has been going. I mentioned it in my editorials but I guess I never really told my prognosis. The surgeon claims to have "got it all". Nothing in the lymph nodes or fatty tissue, he said. "That means you won't need chemo or radiation," he said. My family doctor said the same thing. Then a couple of weeks later I got a call from someone called an oncologist. It seems he has the last word on these things, and he had different ideas. So, after a couple of postponements due to infections (worse than the operation itself), I am now taking chemotherapy. One of the side-effects is that I end up sucking on popsicles and drinking extra-thick milk shakes from McDonalds. Not a bad side-effect, eh?

Thank you for your kind notes and your prayers. They're working.

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Letter/Opinion

Is this a war really about 'good' vs. 'evil'?

The disregard for the sanctity of human life displayed by recent acts of terrorism is certainly and unequivocally "evil." That fact is beyond dispute. Nevertheless it does not necessarily follow that all those who are willing to go to war against the evil of terrorism — America, Great Britain, Canada and all the other allied forces — are just as certainly and just as unequivocally "good." While we respond to evil acts that present a threat to our civilization, our security and our way of life, let us also contemplate whether or not our own way of life and patterns of consumption could also be considered an "evil" in the eyes of other societies and other cultures and other civilizations with which we share a planet.

Suddenly acutely aware of our vulnerability

The recent attacks on the World Trade Center have shaken Americans and the entire Western World. We are suddenly acutely aware of our vulnerability. We feel threatened in a way that is new to us. If America is a vulnerable target, then surely Canadians and other Western countries are as well. Despite all our technology, our economic power, and our very close association with the world's only remaining Super Power, we are at risk! We are at risk. Our way of life, our society, and our civilization are threatened. We are very motivated to remove that threat — to "win the war against terrorism."

But is it realistic to expect that the majority of the world's citizens will also enthusiastically join us in our struggle to eliminate such an obvious evil? Are they likely to be equally outraged and motivated? Is the foremost threat to the safety, dignity and sanctity of their lives and their human rights also terrorism? Or were their sanctity, dignity and rights threatened by something else long before September 11, 2001? If so, terrorism may not be at the top of their list of evils to eliminate. It is all too easy to forget that our particular situation as western citizens is quite different from that of the majority of the world's population.

Let's look at some examples:

- * Presently the top 20 per cent of the world's population — us — is consuming 82.7 per cent of the world's resources. The bottom 20 per cent is forced to make do with a mere 1.4 per cent of the world's resources. The latter may well consider the distribution of the wealth of this planet to represent a greater affront to the sanctity and dignity of their lives — to the security of their way of life, their culture and their civilization — than the threat of terrorists who specifically target the symbols of the prevailing western economic system — the twin towers of the World Trade Center.

- * Even a Canadian guaranteed the minimum wage of \$7/hr has as much as 50 times more command over the distribution of the world's resources as an employee earning as little as \$0.14/hr in the overseas sweatshops where most of our clothes are made. Is it realistic to expect that acts of terrorism against well-dressed and well-heeled westerners will be seen as the number one threat to the sanctity and dignity of the life

and culture of a sweatshop worker?

- * Millions of people around the world have long suffered under state terrorism — state terrorism under the hands of brutal bloody dictators such as former Indonesian president Suharto. (Suharto's right to rule was legitimized by the Canadian government when it invited and offered Suharto protection when he came to Canada as the spokesperson for Indonesia and East Timor at the APEC summit held in Vancouver.) Is it realistic to expect that East Timorese and Indonesians and countless others in Asia, Latin America and elsewhere who also suffered under state terrorism supported and legitimated by western governments now share and identify with western outrage over threats to western lives, lifestyles and liberties? The very same West that had shown such complete disregard for the sanctity, dignity and safety of Indonesian, East Timorese, Iraqi, El Salvadoran, Nicaraguan, Chilean and Palestinian lives, lifestyles, dignity and safety?

- * Western countries have long been able to rely on economic, technological and military superiority to defend their interests. Is it realistic to expect civilizations and countries that do not have such means at their disposal to unquestioningly accept the decisions and initiatives and priorities of western countries? Has the West created an effective alternative means by which the world's refugees and victims of state terrorism, poverty and famine might seek justice?

Unless the world's marginalized peoples see what we call "the civilized world" and what we call "freedom and democracy" — our economic, political, military and judicial systems — as also respecting, promoting and protecting the sanctity and dignity of their lives, marginalized peoples of the world may well come to see what we consider to be "terrorists" as the lesser "evil"! Unless they are provided with a satisfactory and effective means to challenge current use of western economic, political and military might, they may well come to regard what we consider to be "terrorists" as "freedom fighters."

Terrorism only one of several evils disregarding sanctity of life

We must not let our privilege and power blind us to the fact that terrorism is only one of several evils that disregard the sanctity and dignity of human life. If we in the west struggle only against those evils that threaten our civilization and our way of life, we run the risk of alienating ourselves from the majority of the world's population. Insofar as our economic, technological and military power threatens other civilizations and dehumanizes others, we will continue to create more enemies than we do allies.

On the other hand, if we fight all the evils that threaten the sanctity and dignity of the lives of each and every member of the human family with the same zeal and commitment with which we are now fighting terrorists we will eliminate the support base that terrorists need to continue to do their dirty work. To narrowly focus only on evil done by terrorists is to live in the fear that anyone and everyone who questions the

present distribution of power, wealth and privilege is potentially a terrorist and/or terrorist sympathizer.

If all those who are not for us — who are not for maintaining western privilege, western economic, technological and military superiority — are indeed against us, we have an awful lot of killing left to do! That would

be a very, very long and very, very cold war indeed. Only when we acknowledge and strive to eliminate our own evil practices with the same zeal as we strive to curtail the evil practices of others will "good" win over "evil."

Stewart Vriesinga
Clinton, Ont.

Churches may lose charitable status if they break law

David van der Woerd

As a legal adviser, I do not always find it easy to impress upon people the importance of compliance with laws which do not conform with their established practices. This is particularly so when they have never directly felt the repercussions of non-compliance. But when American administrators, clergymen not lawyers, encourage Canadians to disregard a law that prohibits paid personnel from being seated on the board of directors of their charities, while they enjoy complete immunity from the other side of the 49th parallel, I'm dumbfounded.

I had no intention of commenting upon the astonishing letter by the CRC general secretary in a recent *Christian Courier*, until I was reminded by a fellow church member that many people who read the exchanges may not have ready access to competent legal advisers, or those who may unsuspectingly accept that position as credible because it was written by a person in leadership and trust. I was also reminded that if I did not reply people would assume I agree.

Churches not beyond rebuke

It is true that to date in Canada, to the best of my knowledge, no CRC has ever been formally disciplined for permitting pastors to serve on the board of directors of their church. However, if you follow the trends in

Canadian society and the courts, you realize that it is foolhardy for the CRC, or any other church for that matter, to live under the illusion that their traditions are beyond rebuke when they conflict with law. Canadian charities caught in legal misdeeds, deliberate or inadvertent, make excellent headlines. Churches are no different.

Take, for example, the recently reported AIDS Society of Ontario case. The AIDS Society wanted to raise funds to build a hospice for children with HIV, so the board of directors hired a professional fundraiser to lead the campaign. The campaign was successful enough, raising almost a million dollars, but not as profitable as expected.

Similarly, many Christian charities and churches have embarked upon capital projects in recent years. In the Hamilton area, within the CRC alone, I need both hands to count the number of organizations that had campaigns to raise funds. Some of them used professional fundraisers. Some of those campaigns failed to reach the stated goals.

Why did the AIDS Society make the headlines? They were sued by the Public Guardian and Trustee because of complaints from the public that they were spending too much money from their capital campaign on administrative costs and not enough for

See CHURCHES page 17...

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Education/News

Nobel Prize winner talks about his Christian faith



ROBERT VANDERVENNEN

Nobel Prize winner Bill Phillips chats with questioners after his lecture.

Robert VanderVennen

WATERLOO, Ont. — Nobel Prize winner Bill Phillips has found that his winning that prize in physics in 1997 has given him a surprising platform for talking about his Christian faith and its relation to science.

Phillips was the featured speaker November 2 at the annual meeting of the Canadian Scientific and Christian Affiliation, an open meeting attended by a few hundred members of the University of Waterloo community. He is a physicist who shared the prize with two other physicists on the basis of his discovering how to freeze atoms to within a few billionths of a degree of the absolute zero of temperature.

What's this evangelical Christian like who has won the Nobel Prize? He's a man who loves life, loves his work and enjoys being with people. God rejoices with us as scientists who learn about the world he has created, he said with a twinkle in his eye. To his amazement the media in Stockholm, Sweden, where the prizes are awarded, already picked up on the fact that he is a man of faith. When he got home, television crews from all over the world raced to his house to interview this person who, oddly enough, is a Christian.

Faith is a gift

Every scientist certainly has faith, says Phillips. You can't do science at all without believing in the regularity of the world. Belief in God is just as rational as believing alternative views of the universe. Faith is a gift, he said, and the question is whether we accept that gift or not. In fact, you can't really understand some aspects of

science, like the nature of consciousness, without religious faith.

Studies of cosmology, contends Phillips, have shown that there is a God, an intelligent person, who has created everything. Many scientists have come to believe this. Some may believe that God created the world and then left it, or they may believe, like Einstein, in a non-personal God. But those options don't work for me, said Phillips. For one thing, Einstein's god doesn't give you joy in your scientific work as the Christian God does.

Religion shows us our relation with God, how to relate with people, and how God created the world. Ultimate meaning requires faith, it requires religion, Phillips affirmed. It is important for us to ask the right questions about faith and science, but often the wrong questions are asked. Phillips spoke of himself as a very ordinary scientist and a very ordinary Christian. He is clearly full of life, an engaging person with a robust modesty.

Phillips said he grew up in a devout Christian family, attended a Christian college and received his PhD degree from MIT in Boston. He is now a member of a small multiracial Methodist church near Washington, D.C., where he enjoys singing in the church choir songs that have arisen from the experiences of blacks in America. He says his chief mentors on issues of science and faith have been professor Ian Barbour of Minnesota and professor Howard Van Til, retired from Calvin College. Phillips works in Washington as a physicist at the National Institute for Standards and Technology, formerly called the National Bureau of Standards.

Pilgrims to the East

Religion is becoming less of a settled inheritance in young people's life, if anything is handed down at all. People choose religion today like they choose restaurants: according to their tastes. It depends on what fits their style, addresses their particular stage in life, or what suits their "worshiping needs." Like the young woman who walked into my colleague's office and asked him to help her design her own religion.

I call this the "tourist" approach to faith. Religious options exist for your consumption and your evaluation. You take what you like and leave the rest. In effect, your desires — you — are the central figure in your religion. God and religious devotion are a reflection of your delights and prejudices.

This caricature isn't totally fair. There are also people who aren't just church shopping, but genuinely seeking. They are not tourists, but pilgrims, and they come not as spectators, but as investigators and participants. Their prime value is authenticity, so they wrestle with the faith they inherited by family or geography. They want to be a part of something that is larger than themselves, something that gets them closer to God.

Reformed Franky Schaeffer goes east

One example of such pilgrimage is the recent wave of "converts" to Eastern Orthodoxy. It seems that Christians who are seeking a theological and historical depth to their faith wander towards the East. Evangelicals, including Reformed people, are well-represented among the crowd "returning to the New Testament Church." Some famous converts are Francis Schaeffer's son Franky and Campus Crusade for Christ evangelist Peter Guilquist (who came over to Orthodoxy with 2,000 followers).

An Orthodox meeting was advertised in the university here and I thought I would investigate. I found out that they are starting an Orthodox mission in town — a church plant — sponsored by the Antiochian Orthodox Church. The priest who gave the talk had switched over after being discontented as a Reformed pastor.

"I was attracted to Orthodoxy for three

Campus Culture

Peter Schuurman



reasons," he said. "First of all, its consistent, unchanged doctrine since the early church. Secondly, its orderly, truthful, traditional liturgy. And finally, its church order, which is both conciliar and hierarchical."

He did have some struggles with the use of icons, the veneration of Mary, and the title of "Father," but through much discussion and reading he came to an understanding about these practices that allowed him to make the leap to Orthodox clergy.

Recovering from denominational amnesia

There is a deep pride in being Orthodox. Their (arguable) rendition of church history states that all the church was Orthodox until the Roman patriarch pulled away in 1054 A.D. This spirit of dissonance stayed with the Western church erupting again 500 years later in the Reformation. Thus the Orthodox Church is the only part of Christendom that has direct, unbroken continuity from the New Testament onwards.

The Armenian Orthodox Church is celebrating their 1700th anniversary this year. If people find their pilgrimage taking them to its ornate sanctuaries, I can respect that. In fact, it would be my hope that in the coming decades all Christians will extend their reach in church history, and reclaim the fathers and mothers of our faith who we may have neglected in our zealous celebration of our own denominational origins. We can learn how they have related with their Muslim neighbors, how they constructively used icons for people who related best with images, and how they made worship a

multi-sensory, participatory encounter with God. Such things are not only of the past, but vital to the Church's future.



Peter Schuurman is the Christian Reformed campus chaplain at Brock University in St. Catharines, Ont.

Freedom House calls for action after Pakistan massacre

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Religion Today) — The Freedom House Center for Religious Freedom has condemned the Oct. 28 massacre of 16 Christians inside a church in Bahawalpur, Pakistan, and issued a call for action.

The Washington-based organization has called on the U.S. government and its allies to combat the growing Al-Qaeda-linked persecution of religious minorities around the world, according to a press release by Freedom House. The persecution in Pakistan and elsewhere is part of a pattern apparent before Sept. 11, said

Freedom House. Even in Pakistan, Christians are currently on "death row" for vague blasphemy charges.

Intensified persecution of Christians

"The intensification of persecution of Christians and other non-Muslims by radical Islamists over the past five years has been amply documented by Freedom House, church groups, and the U.S. State Department," said Nina Shea, director of the Center for Religious Freedom.

On Oct. 28, six assailants

opened fire inside the Pakistani church, killing 16 men, women and children during a two-minute shooting spree.

This is "the most recent example of thousands of Christians who have been killed and persecuted by those instigated or supported by Islamist terrorist networks in Egypt, Nigeria, Sudan, Indonesia and the Philippines," Shea said. "The Bush administration should take effective action to protect these vulnerable communities."

Arts/Media

Film Review

Making connections

K-PAX

Starring: Kevin Spacey, Jeff Bridges, Alfred Woodard, Aaron Paul, Mary McCormack
Directed by: Iain Softley
Written by: Charles Leavitt, Bryan Goluboff
Distributor: Universal Pictures
Reviewed by Ron VandenBurg

Recently I have a running joke with a few of my students in my grade 7/8 class. Ever since I pointed out just a few potential Christ-figures in a few of their favorite movies, they seem to think that I see Christ-figures in every movie. Sure, in the *Star Wars* serial, Anakin Skywalker was a child of a virgin birth, and Neo of *The Matrix* was sent to "earth" to save all people. Just because a character redeems people, that doesn't make that character a Christ figure, does it? Aww, come on Mr. VandenBurg, not every thing points back to the Bible. Hmmm. Come to think of it, is that all bad?

A Christ-like figure

After our brief discussion, one of my students turned to a classmate saying, "One movie I wouldn't mind seeing is *K-PAX*." Well, sorry to tell you, but of all the movies to look for a Christ-figure.

The movie begins with a blurred vision high angle shot. As the light and dark shift about, we see objects moving and come to realize that they are people. Only a homeless man is the unsure witness of the arrival of a mysterious man. This man appears to come out of a curtain of light, looking about the busyness of the train station. When he comes to the aid of a woman robbed, the police question him and the man introduces himself as Prot, an alien from a planet 1,000 light years away known as K-PAX.

Kevin Spacey plays Prot, who after this brief introduction is whisked away to the Psychiatric Institute of Manhattan. He is poked and prodded, put on drug therapy without any effect, and raises more questions than answers. What human can detect ultra-violet light?

Spacey plays his character with such an outward peace that we hope that the filmmaker will either tear it down and show us the character's inner rage and pain or that he will allow us to care about this character and believe that Prot actually is who he says he is.

As a representative of the human race, Jeff Bridges



Doc Powell (Jeff Bridges, left) talks with Prot, played by Kevin Spacey.

character is Prot's psychiatrist, a bored, tired, world-weary man with nothing to believe in. He is isolating himself from his family, and we, the audience, can see where this path is taking him—unless someone comes along and saves him soon.

Before meeting Prot for the first time, Doc Powell wonders aloud if the next one he treats will be Jesus Christ. Doc's salvation comes as he continues to explore the very convincing story of Prot's alien existence. Looking for explanations, Doc attempts to shock Prot out of his delusion by taking him to a local observatory to meet some astronomy professors.

Doubtful at first, these men ask him about his traveling by light and about his planet. Prot's answers not only convince, but the scientists leave baffled, and maybe converted. If my students were reading this, I might point out that this scene is a not-too-subtle parallel to Jesus teaching the Elders of the Temple.

Alien 'works the room'

From his first action at the train station, Prot works to connect to each person he meets. Knowing each person by name, he "works the room" complimenting everyone and giving each person his special attention. As he interacts with the patients in his ward, he goes about quietly healing them. Into the dark common room, Prot's actions bring light and color, encouraging the other patients to break down their walls, move away from what isolates them from the rest of the world and find a way to connect with the people around them.

Although sensitive to the light, Prot continues to bring light—actual, emotional and intellectual—to every person that he meets.

Doctor Powell himself is healed as he continues to meet with Prot. Their exchanges become less about Prot and more about what being human means. In a discussion about law, we hear Prot state, "Every being knows right from wrong." When talking about justice, Prot suggests that Buddha and Jesus had a different idea from the rest of the world, but no one listened, not even the Buddhists and the Christians. All this, while Prot eats a banana, peel and all.

Psychiatrist finds new life purpose

The psychiatrist in search of answers finds new purpose in his life in his attempt to save Prot. As he continues to ignore his family and other responsibilities, others see his work as an obsession, one asking, "Why choose to save him?" Powell responds, "He chose me." And Prot encourages Powell and his family to connect again with each other and with an estranged son from the doctor's first marriage.

Through the doctor, *K-PAX* leads the audience to come to a plausible explanation for who this man really is. I appreciated that the movie did not try to explain all the mystery of the man known as Prot, thereby leaving the door open to faith and the intangible effect that Prot had on the patients, the ward staff, the doctor and his family.

Movies about aliens coming to visit earth usually tell us very little about the visitor and show a lot about us humans. Prot encourages Powell to look for connections and to see that the only way to make a difference in another person's life is to be connected. It's the kind of theme that might be expressed by a Christ-figure, don't you think?

Jenkins, Lahaye release ninth 'Left Behind' book

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. (EP) — Bestselling authors Jerry Jenkins and Tim LaHaye marked the release of the ninth book in their popular "Left Behind" series with a joint book signing at the nation's largest shopping mall, Minnesota's Mall of America, Oct. 30. That release party for *The Face of Desecration* is the only joint appearance by LaHaye and Jenkins scheduled in connection with this book release.

The two authors share the same agent, and that's how their collaboration came about. "Since about 1985, Dr. Tim LaHaye had the title and the idea for fictionalizing an account of the Rapture and the Tribulation. He looked for years for a novelist to run with his idea, and our mutual agent introduced us in 1991," explains Jenkins.

Jenkins gets the fun part

Jenkins does all of the writing for the series, building on research and chronology developed by LaHaye. "He has studied the biblical prophecies for longer than I have been alive," Jenkins says of LaHaye. "He provides a chart of the chronology of the biblical events and commentaries on the passages I will cover in a particular novel. I get the fun part, writing novels to fit his interpretation of Scripture. Basically, I try to put realistic characters in the way of biblical events and see what happens. I research technology, weaponry, aviation, etc., to make the stories credible, but Dr. LaHaye is the greatest resource I could have to stay on track theologically and biblically."

Book nine of possible 12

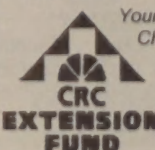
The Face of Desecration is the ninth book in the best-selling series in Christian publishing history, but Jenkins says he originally planned only one book. "When I was halfway through the writing of that manuscript, I had covered one week of the seven years. Tyndale agreed to make it a trilogy. When the first book covered two weeks, we decided on six, then seven titles. When I finished book four and was only two-and-a-half years into the Tribulation, Tyndale asked if I really thought I could squeeze four-and-a-half more years into three books. I said I could if I changed the pace and made the books more action-oriented than character-driven. Tyndale asked how many titles it would take to maintain the same pace (which they saw as one of the reasons for the success). I said six to get to the halfway point and six more to finish."

The release schedule for the remaining books has been revised to one per year, a pace that allows Jenkins to pursue other projects between *Left Behind* novels. "I have lost no enthusiasm for the series, but variety keeps me fresh and helps recharge the batteries," he explains. "I confess I'm looking forward to the eventual end of the *Left Behind* series, as I have some fiction ideas I'd love to tackle when I can give myself to them."

Although the commercial success of the books is gratifying, what really pleases Jenkins is the spiritual impact of the series. "Between Dr. LaHaye and me we have heard personally from more than 2,000 people who tell us they have become believers through reading these books," he says.

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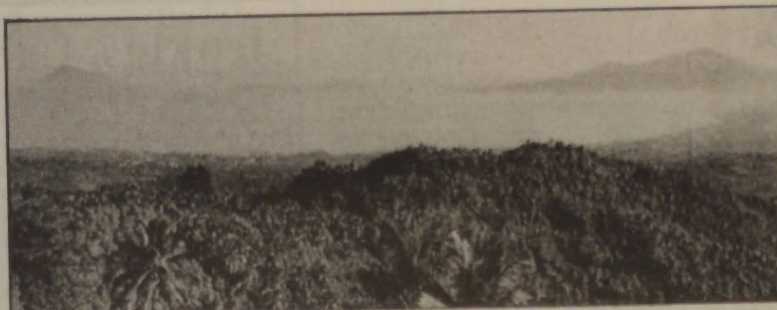
Church

Muslim jihad fighters attack Christian villages in Indonesia

PALU, Indonesia (EP) — Jihad terrorists attacked three villages in Central Sulawesi during the early morning hours on Nov. 1. Several hundred Muslim jihad warriors who are affiliated with the terrorist group Laskar Jihad appeared from out of the jungles, attacking the Christian villages of Tomata, Pinedapa and Kasiuncu.

The terrorists set fire to most of the homes and destroyed churches. Three Christians were confirmed dead in the village of Tomata and International Christian Concern reported that many people were injured.

Later that same day, terrorists



The jungles of the Indonesian island of Sulawesi.

blocked the main road from Poso to Palu, the capital of Central Sulawesi. The terrorists stopped

cars and buses as they attempted to identify Christians. Sources say that at least four Christians in

vehicles forced to stop were killed. The police and military were later dispatched to the area, but the jihad terrorists had fled back to the jungles.

Another attack by the Laskar Jihad terrorist took

place in the early morning hours of Nov. 2. The Christian village of Malitu, 20 miles from Poso, was attacked and once again Muslim

terrorists destroyed nearly every home and a church. There were no deaths reported, as Christians fled to the jungles for safety. Before this attack, Sulawesi and the neighboring Maluku Islands had experienced a month of relative peace. The region has been the setting of intense fighting between Christian natives and Muslim "jihad" or holy war invaders. Since the fighting began in 1999, over 8,000 people have died and an estimated 500,000 Indonesians have been forced to flee their homes.

Churches risk becoming targets in Zimbabwe

Special to Compass Direct

HARARE, Zimbabwe — "This is no longer a free country. People live in abject fear of violence, crime and threats. The rule of law is no longer respected; terror and intimidation go unpunished."

These condemning words were published in a statement that was made earlier this year by Roman Catholic Church leaders. The Conference of Religious Superiors of the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe openly condemned the government's activities as a "political power game."

Since then, however, the church has been silent and many priests

are unhappy about the activities of the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union — Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) and its attempts to intimidate people into supporting them.

Churches not vocal enough

One cleric said he was disappointed that the churches were not more vocal in condemning the injustices of the government. Incidents of violence against black families living in remote villages have increased dramatically and have created an atmosphere of fear.

This seems to be preventing churchmen from speaking out. Those that do can expect threats, a hate campaign in the government media or retaliatory violence against their families.

Pius Ncube, the Catholic archbishop of Bulawayo, has received death threats for condemning the violence and the activities of ZANU-PF. At least one priest from Mutare was said to be in hiding, in fear of his life.

President Robert Mugabe was reported to have "turned against the churches" following last year's elections when his party suffered defeat in almost half of the con-

tested seats. The president then came out to accuse leaders of all the churches of spreading an anti-ZANU-PF gospel.

Since then, threats and strategic appointments appear to be working. Norbert Kunonga, the new bishop of Harare, whose candidature was questioned, has voiced strong support for the government. He referred to human rights activists as "motivated by self-interest" and involved in a "tactical self-defense mechanism" against the government's land redistribution policy.

In response, one human rights activist called the bishop's first

sermon "backward-looking" and "outrageous."

"The Anglican Church has been obvious in its silence over government excesses," wrote a critic recently. "When the country was still known as Rhodesia under the regime of Ian Smith, the Anglican Church did not speak out on the atrocities committed by government forces then."

A human rights group recorded 47 political murders and more than 20,000 cases of other abuses ranging from assault to rape and torture last year, with ZANU-PF implicated in more than 90 per cent of all offenses.

Catholic, evangelical theologians study issue of Scripture and tradition

... continued from page 1

seeks to recognize the unity that is ours as brothers and sisters in Christ."

For several years, Catholic and evangelical theologians have been studying the issue of Scripture and tradition, a major difference between the two communities, he said, noting that publication of a new statement on this theme is planned for the spring of 2002.

"All of this is the work of Christ before it is our work. The only unity pleasing to God is the unity that is established in truth. The only thing that truly brings us together in Christ is truth. Our task is that of obedience," Neuhaus said.

In response, Gros noted Vatican II's impact on today's Catholics. "Catholics are in revival because of Vatican II. More Bible reading, more laypeople and deacons are involved, and there is a return to the values of the gospels."

Regarding ECT, Gros observed that on the Catholic side, the

evangelical side is hardly taken into account. "The evangelicals, in a positive way, are yet to appear on the scanner," he said, adding that there is a need to help people understand that there is more to evangelicalism than an anti-Catholic sentiment.

"But I believe evangelicals need to know that we are Bible-believing Christians, who always had the Bible as the centre of our faith. We keep a closer connection between the invisible church and the visible church than is true of Protestants, and evangelicals in particular," Gros said.

'Contrarian impulse'

Beeson's dean, Timothy George, noted that evangelicals have often been defined by their "contrarian impulse."

"We've not been as well known for what we are for, as for what we are against," George said.

"Evangelicalism is a renewal movement in historic Christian

orthodoxy," he said. "Evangelicals accept the apostolic witness of the early church, as well as the great themes of the Protestant Reformation, and the many movements of awakening from the Methodist revival to Pentecostalism," George said.

Conversations are difficult

He noted several reasons why conversations between evangelicals and Catholics are difficult, beginning with the "virulent nativism" that is part of American culture. "That fear has subsided, but not been eliminated," he said, noting that the scars of persecutions, "on both sides of the confessional divide," extend back through centuries. The two groups, he said, must come to a reconciliation of shared memories. Also, he noted, many evangelicals find it difficult to think that they could enter into dialogue with Catholics without compromising.

George took issue with

Neuhaus' reference that the church can only be used in a singular sense.

"Scripture uses it in the plural. Paul writes letters to churches. Individual churches must repent and return to Christ, or else they can cease to be," George said. "Evangelicals would say that churches can come and go, but the one true church to which all believers belong comprises all of God's redeemed people through the ages."

While ECT builds on the things that the two groups can affirm together, such as the Trinity and salvation through Christ alone, the documents "make clear the differences we still have," George said. "Truth doesn't always burst forth with absolute clarity and fullness at once."

George described types of ecumenism, such as that "of the trenches," identified by the common stand Evangelicals and Catholics took on the sanctity of human life. The ECT process, he said, has

been guided by an ecumenism of conviction, not of accommodation, and an ecumenism of fellowship has followed.

"All who truly believe in Jesus Christ are brothers and sisters in the Lord, regardless of denominational differences," George said.

He also pointed to the ecumenism of common witness in a world that needs people who follow Jesus Christ to demonstrate God's love and grace in their relationships with one another. This common witness, he said, must be based on the biblical and apostolic witnesses of the Christian faith.

Largely because of this, George said, evangelicals can have a common witness with Catholics that they can't have with Mormons, Jehovah's Witness and many other sectarian groups.

"Pilgrims on the Sawdust Trail" also included sessions devoted to conversations among evangelicals and fundamentalists, Pentecostals and mainline Protestants.

Church

More churches burned by Muslim extremists in Nigeria

Obed Minchakpu

KADUNA, Nigeria (Compass) — Persons believed to be Islamic fundamentalists burned three churches in Kaduna city of northern Nigeria on October 6, 2001.

The gutted remains of the church buildings were adorned with the posters of Saudi millionaire Osama bin Laden — prime suspect in the September 11 terrorist attacks in the United States. The churches, which were set ablaze about 2 a.m., belong to two Nigerian Christian denominations — the Cherubim and Seraphim Church and the Word of Faith Ministry.

Police security alert

Nigeria state police officials immediately put the state of Kaduna under a security alert. Armed mobile policemen and other security agents took over the streets in the churches' neighborhoods just as residents were seen

fleeing their homes, some running to army barracks.

"It was due to the quick intervention of some Christian residents in the area who alerted security agents at midnight that saved the lives of about five Christians who were inside one of the churches already padlocked by the Muslim mob," said the Rev. Emmanuel Adamu, a Word of Faith Ministry pastor.

Burnt by fanatics

"You can see that even that building over there, which houses a supermarket belonging to a Christian, was burned down by the fanatics," Pastor Adamu told Compass.

The torching of the churches came barely two days after the Kaduna state police officials said they had received reports of plans by Muslim fanatics to burn some churches in Kaduna city.

"The governor has already

visited the scene and commiserated with church elders. He assured, however, that the police are already investigating the attack on the places of worship," said spokesman Mallam Mukhtar Sirajo. Kaduna Governor Alhaji Mohammed Makarfi reportedly visited the elders of one of the churches with a promise of government assistance.

"For sometime now, we have been aware of plans by Muslim fundamentalists to attack Christians and burn down churches," said church elder Saidu Dogo, secretary general of the Christian Association of Nigeria in northern Nigeria.

"The Muslims in Kaduna are desperate to spark off another crisis. Besides, Muslim vigilante groups were at the spot where the churches were set ablaze, and they did nothing to prevent it," he said.

In February and May last year, religious riots in Kaduna caused

the death of thousands of people and the destruction of properties worth millions of dollars.

Eight Muslims arrested

Meanwhile, police arrested eight Muslims suspected of burning down a church in Mubi in northern Nigeria's Adamawa state. The eight were accused of burning a church building and inciting religious disturbances.

State policeman Mohammed A. Mohammed told Compass in Yola that Sani Usman, along with seven other Muslims, went to a church in Mubi with a gallon of gasoline and

set the church ablaze while members of the church were worshipping.

Mohammed said that the church building and cars on the church premises were completely burned, and many worshippers sustained injuries in the fighting that ensued. The attackers were sighted and caught by church members, who almost lynched the alleged arsonists, Mohammed said. Police intervened, and the suspects are currently being detained at the police headquarters.

Fourth church torched in Malaysia

(Religion Today) — The Christ Community Center Church in Subang Jaya (Malaysia) was destroyed by arson on Oct. 27, according to a report from the Barnabas Fund. Police had been called out to the building in the early hours of Saturday morning after the burglar alarm went off. Finding nothing suspicious, they left. Three hours later, flames engulfed the building.

Molotov cocktails thrown

Christ Community is the fourth Malaysian church to have been burnt in recent weeks, according to the report. A serious blaze gutted the Marthoma Christian Community Center in Sungei Petani several weeks ago. On Oct. 13, chairs and other church equipment were burnt and destroyed in Christ the King Church, also in Sungei Petani, and Molotov cocktails were thrown at St. Philip's Church

in Segamat, Johor.

The first three fires were the result of arson attacks, carried out by suspected Islamic militants, sources told The Barnabas Fund. "It now seems likely that the Christ Community Center is the latest victim in a wave of attacks which seem set to continue," said the report. Church leaders are advising Christians to notify the police immediately if they receive any threatening messages.

Militant Islam is reportedly on the increase in Malaysia, influenced by extremist groups in surrounding nations, like Indonesia's Laskar Jihad. The government of Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad is working hard to combat these trends and preserve Malaysia's reputation as a majority-Muslim nation where Christians and other minorities do not need to fear violence.

Muslim and Christian life views

Rev. John Westendorp of Blacktown Australia, Editor of *Trowel and Sword*.

BLACKTOWN, Australia — Since the September 11 events numerous analyses of Islam have been appearing in the media. It is particularly interesting that such articles often stress that Islam is more than just a religion. Islam is a culture — a way of living. It has distinctive views of the world and of life that shapes the lifestyle of its followers. Islam is a way of life.

I have a problem with that. Not that I don't believe it. On the contrary — Islam is a way of life. Everything we hear and see from the Muslim world confirms it. No! My problem is that the media seems to subtly imply that unlike Islam, Christianity is not a way of life. The various articles I have come across seem to suggest that when one becomes a follower of Mohammed then that affects one's whole lifestyle but being a Christian only has to do with our private moral and spiritual life and doesn't affect life as a whole. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Not good ambassadors

The problem is that we Christians have not been good ambassadors for our faith. We have often kept it secluded from the world at large. We tend to put our religion in a box marked for Sundays and for devotions only. A privatized faith, kept out of the workplace and out of politics. We've not wanted it to interfere with education and the corporate boardroom. As a consequence, those looking on from the outside have never come to realize that Christianity, too, has cultural overtones... that it has implications for the way we look at the world and at life.

The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament make it quite clear that Christianity is not just a private matter between God and oneself. Rather it is a

life-changing faith that should and does lead to a certain lifestyle.

Jesus said that Christians are to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world. He left us with no choice but to be a positive influence in all areas of society. A careful reading of the Bible makes clear that in every area of life a Christian is to be distinctively different. We are not just here to snatch souls out of hell. We are here to make a difference in education and politics, in economics and health-care.

Biblical Christianity insists that the claims of Jesus Christ are to be heard — not just in churches on Sundays but also in our schools and in our boardrooms, because Christianity is more than just a religion, it is a way of life.

A transformation of society

Every year in October, we usually remember the Reformation. A priest by the name of Martin Luther finally got fed up with the sad state of the church. He particularly objected to the "selling of indulgences" — it boiled down to selling forgiveness in order to raise funds for the Vatican. Luther hammered 95 theses (points for debate) to the chapel door in Wittenberg. But what flowed out of that was not just the correction of some abuses in the church. What flowed out of that was a transformation of society.

In the city of Geneva in Switzerland another reformer, John Calvin, led the way in applying biblical principles to the whole life of the city. The Reformation recognized that the Christian faith must not be privatized and limited to the church. It needs to flow through into all areas of life.

A privatized faith, kept for Sundays will not be able to stand up to the claims of Islam. We need something more radical — a Christian faith that is more than a religion... that is a lifestyle.

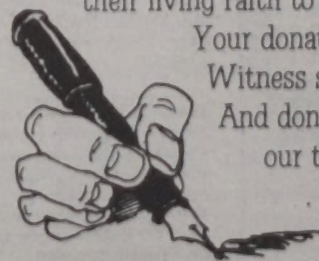
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Agriculture

Making the agricultural use of land a priority

Elbert van Donkersgoed

Ontario is a big place, with lots of room for cities, houses, shops, factories and agriculture. The business of farming needs just 10 per cent of our landscape to thrive: the agricultural land. Countryside smart growth would long ago have dedicated our most productive land to farming and on-farm businesses.

But the Ontario provincial government has yet to establish agriculture's use of our landscape as a provincial interest. The Provincial Policy Statement under the Planning Act treats farmland like a holding zone — until something "better" comes along: like a new subdivision for a town, a communication tower for a cell phone company, a retirement lot or an industry that can demonstrate a link to agriculture. As a result, Ontario has lost almost 19 per cent of its Class One agricultural land and is losing two per cent per decade.

Major fixing needed

The Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing is reviewing its provincial interest document. It needs some major fixes.

One. Stop lot creation in agricultural areas. We have enough lots in farm country. No more lot creation for retirement lots, agriculture-related uses, secondary uses, public service facilities, and infilling or surplus houses.

A retirement lot provides no permanent benefit to farm families. Historically, the retired farm family stays just 1.8 to three years. Let's allow better solutions for temporary residences: granny flats or temporary trailers.

Undermining rural towns

Continued scattered development is undermining the well-

being of rural towns and villages. There are not enough economic redevelopment resources to both modernize towns and villages and dot the countryside with new industrial or commercial ventures.

Missed opportunities

Many towns and villages have already missed opportunities as a result of three decades of scattered development. Ten businesses added to an existing town creates potential for spin-off activities, a donut shop perhaps. Ten businesses, scattered one per rural concession, cannot possibly develop the critical mass essential for further sustainable development.

Two. Update the definition of agricultural use. Don't limit the business of farming to primary production. Primary production has faded dramatically as a share of the consumer value of food. Agriculture, to be a viable economic sector, must encompass a full range of farming activities. Packing, treating, processing, marketing, selling, sorting or storage of locally grown or raised products, should be permitted uses on lands designated or zoned for agriculture.

Expand permitted land uses

Three. Expand permitted uses on existing lots. Up to 85 per cent of farm families are involved in economic activities in addition to farming. A growing number of these activities have no relation to agriculture but their contribution is essential to the viability of farms and a reasonable standard of living.

A farm family should be able to earn an income on a hundred-acre farm but in many cases the farming activities can only be a contribution to that family income. Farms need more uses.

Details of the CFFO submission to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing can be found at: www.christianfarmers.org/policy/subm-Planning-Act-Review.htm

Elbert van Donkersgoed is the Strategic Policy Advisor of the Christian Farmers Federation of Ontario, Canada. This was his Corner Post column for October 19, 2001, heard weekly on CFCO Radio, Chatham and CKXN Radio, Wingham, Ontario.

Shared commitment keeps Christian farmers together

Warm bodies littered the front lawn on the last stop of the first farm tour of the Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta (CFFA). Sprawled on the grass, reclining in lawn chairs, the contentment of the tour members was palpable. Having just disposed of a grand feast as only country people can prepare and demolish, the rumblings of various conversations and digestion rolled off across the fields.

Joy of shared experience

The joy of shared experience was part and parcel of the discovery of principle underlying the formation of the CFFA 30 years ago. Experience cannot be separated from principle. Farmers, some city dwellers, and hired staff have all made a contribution to the understanding and enjoyment of stewardship, charitable and just agriculture. Though there have been some difficulties, membership in CFFA has been rewarding. Meetings, whether



Vern Gleddie surveys his ranch. Earthkeeping emphasizes the Lordship of Christ over all of life including agriculture.

board, executive, or committee have for the most part been not only productive, but also convivial. Retreats, too, were memorable times where members gathered for a couple of days to ponder current issues in farming or plan for the future of the organization. It was not all business, however, not even while discussing issues. There may have been tense moments during debate, but there was always laughter.

Sadly, a parting of the ways came along from time to time. It was discovered that some of us were not so enamored of conservation as were others. Some did not want to know how North American spending habits were contributing to poverty of others around the world. Some did not want to put principle before practice. On the other hand, others may have taken too hard a line on some of these considerations, ignoring for the moment that all are guilty of compromising principle. It is easy to forget that as farmers and friends we never really achieve even our most laudable goals, but are only working toward responsible agriculture.

A few years back, CFFA members decided to emphasize our broad mandate by changing the name to "Earthkeeping". The name "Earthkeeping" was chosen to describe activity rather than a presumed identity; it reflected attempted achievement rather than giving the impression of fulfillment. The founding members

COUNTRY COUNTERCULTURE

VERN M. GLEDDIE

were almost all from one church denomination. They were a diverse bunch though, having joined the movement for a variety of reasons. The core members could arguably be best described as neo-Kuyperian Calvinists.

They have been the most deliberate about membership and able to articulate a basis for existence of the movement beyond that of an association of farmers banding together for mutual benefit. They emphasized the Lordship of Christ over all of life including agriculture. They looked all the way back to creation for a significant element of mandate, that is, to care for the garden. They valued the scriptural emphasis on community versus individualism. The vision was similar to that driving sister Christian organizations.

Not all identified with that vision

Not all farmers who were Christian identified with that vision. The president of Alberta's largest farm organization at the time, and a professing Christian, came to the first annual meeting of CFFA/Earthkeeping to plead with us to disband and to join his organization. He felt the only way for Christians to exert influence on agricultural policy-making was from within a secular organization. Similar messages have been received since.

It seemed near impossible at times to get across to other Christians the idea of communal Christian thought and action. A politically aware young farmer picked up on a conversation overheard between two Earthkeeping members in a seed-cleaning plant one day. He asked one of the members about the conversation. The member asked if he was a believer to which he replied, "Well, my brother is a preacher." It is difficult to reach past such an arms-length idea of Christianity.

Some joined Earthkeeping and contributed greatly to the work without exactly sharing the theological background of the founding members. Obviously it was possible for people from different Christian traditions to appreciate the call of the Creator/Redeemer. These people from outside, as it were, are to be congratulated for breaking in and sticking with it. The seeming exclusivity of core members must have been daunting.

This has been an attempt to sort out the personal element of Earthkeeping, but of course that is not entirely possible. Words fail to fully describe what binds us together because the commitment is not merely to principles, but principles understood as eternal truths. May there continue to be farmers and others imbued with the desire to work together to please the Lord of creation who loves what He has made.



Vern Gleddie has a sheep ranch near Edmonton, Alta.

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Book Review

Book examines how Christians relate to popular culture

Eyes Wide Open: Looking for God in Popular Culture

By William D. Romanowski

Brazos Press, Grand Rapids, MI, 2001, 171 pp.

Reviewed by Harry der Nederlanden

Television, popular music, movies, best sellers – these forms of popular culture pervade all our lives and we think little of it. Some 50 years ago, Christian families may still have had some modest success keeping such so-called “worldly amusements” out of their lives. Some still struggle to do so. But the vast majority of us watch and listen to and read pretty much what everyone else is.

Christians see same movies

Some Christian critics, like Ted Baehr, founder of *Movieguide*, have tried to convince Hollywood – and the rest of us – that making good, clean, family-oriented movies would attract more viewers and bring bigger profits than the present fare. Statistics, however, do not bear him out. The vast majority of Christians in the U.S. and Canada, Romanowski points out, flock to the same movies and listen to the same music as their unbelieving counterparts. Even those Christians who pay lip service to the standards held up by Christian leaders calling for the elimination of profanity, sex and violence from movies and the celebration of heroic virtues don't seem to be attracted to the thing they praise.

Romanowski does not try to allay the anxiety of Christian leaders and parents about the negative influence of the popular arts. He does recognize in them a powerful means of influencing attitudes, perceptions and ideas. This is, however, not a reason for avoiding them but a good reason for seeking to understand and master them – for good. Moreover, a developed Christian worldview and critical sense can turn the experience of watching a thoroughly humanistic movie into an edifying one, one that gives deeper insight not only into the heart of one's own culture but also into one's own heart.

Christians have tended to treat some arts with deference – classical music, novels in the Great Tradition, poetry, painting, sculpture and so on – while seeing the others – the popular arts – as corrupting almost by nature. *Eyes Wide Open* rightly dismantles such an easy distinction, without, however, suggesting that all popular art is of equal value. There are many pressures on the popular arts to cater to the lowest common denominator,

to produce what sells, to oversimplify and to sensationalize, to opt for the formulaic and the happy ending. But even in such works, Romanowski shows, we learn what makes our culture tick, and that culture is also part of our make-up. Many works of popular art are genuinely art, attaining an insight and complexity that can enrich us, even when they are not infused with a Christian worldview.

Although the popular arts offer us a mix of perspectives and values, many are more than mere diversion (although giving pleasure is nothing to scoff at); they aid us “in our communication, social criticism, social unity and collective memory,” argues Romanowski – as do the other arts. These are worthwhile functions, ones that Christians should not ignore; they provide ways of serving one another and God. Developing a Christian worldview is crucial in the proper enjoyment of the popular arts but also and especially in the creation of songs and movies that will communicate what it is like to live in the Kingdom of God.

A window to attitudes

The popular arts are a window to the attitudes, values and visions that motivate our culture as a whole, that is, what animates the totality of the symbolic and social world we have made for ourselves and our offspring to live in and sustain us. Christians are not only called to save atomistic individuals but to break the power of sin everywhere, and sin is not just confined to the inward person but disturbs and distorts our culture, our social structures and the entire creation.

The opening chapters of *Eyes Wide Open* give an excellent and succinct summary of the relation between the arts, culture, faith and worldview. Romanowski even provides a credible bridge between the Great Commission and the Cultural Mandate. Before there was such a thing as nations in our modern sense of nation-states, he explains, “nation” referred to peoples with distinct cultures. Making disciples of the nations, therefore, “is bound up in making disciples of existing cultures or nurturing people in a way of life informed by Christian principles.” Such ways of life are passed on and cultivated not just by preaching or politics but in our day also by means of the



popular arts – novels, pop music, movies. These are some of the primary ways our culture shares its ideals, beliefs and attitudes.

Narrow view of calling

What has impeded the Christian witness in this sphere is a narrow view of our calling – as if to evangelize were the sum total of our mission, also in the arts. This is reductive: it conveys the impression that religion is only a small part of life rather than the heart and soul of all we do. Writes Romanowski: “...Christian artists should not just be singing that Jesus is a light unto our paths; they also need to create popular art works that show how God's Word is a light and direction for our journey in life. We need popular art to celebrate precious moments, open our eyes to injustice, express our emotions, show us the humor in situations, depict the grief, hardships, and struggles of everyday life, and help us understand the calm of forgiveness and the meaning of redemption. Music is not just for Sunday worship but to lighten the load while we work, energize us while we play, create the

right mood for contemplation or lovemaking.”

When Christians expect the wrong things from the arts – that they must evangelize or idealize and sentimentalize life – they not only injure the ability of their artists to produce something

worthwhile; they also damage the richness and complexity of life in the Kingdom of God. “What does the preponderance of ‘one dimensional God songs’ in contemporary Christian music ... communicate about the Christian life?” asks Romanowski. He quotes: “Exploring with honesty the beauty, brokenness or confusion of the world around us may be far more powerful than any dogma or demand for repentance.”

Not soft on Hollywood

Romanowski is not “soft” on Hollywood. A sizeable part of his book is devoted to exposing the pernicious worldview that is subtly and not-so-subtly conveyed by Hollywood movies – even those good old classics that are relatively free of violence and sex. We are taught to look beyond the surface of these films to the underlying worldview to see that even clean, wholesome films often accepted by Christians as family fare distort our perceptions and expectations.

This is a rich and accessible book that should be read not just by all young people but by their parents (and grandparents) as well. In the last issue of CC, I reviewed Richard Mouw's book on common grace and culture. Romanowski's book does an outstanding job of exploring the implications of our confession that God is graciously present even in areas where people are striving to envision a life without him. A biblically informed criticism like that developed by Romanowski enables us to encounter God even in such cultural expressions, because wherever people wrestle with the meaning of life they cannot help but encounter God.

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News

Day of Encouragement offers wide range of training opportunities

Alan Doerksen

ANCASTER, Ont. — An encouragingly large crowd of 770 church leaders and caregivers took part in Diaconal Ministries Canada's (DMC) Day of Encouragement, held Oct. 20, 2001, at Hamilton District Christian High School in Ancaster, Ont. This was the first major event presented by DMC since it became a national ministry last July. In previous years, Diaconal Ministries of Eastern Canada presented similar events.

A major challenge at the event was choosing from more than 50 workshops, dealing with a wide variety of topics ranging from "Hurt, forgiveness and healing in God's family" to "Liturgical congregational dance" and "Caring for Inactive Members." Most workshops were related to the broader topics of ministry basics, reaching out, partnership with the poor, special ministries, relationships, spiritual growth, vision and leadership, and rural and small town churches.

Vision into action

Ben Vandezande, former executive director of Diaconal Ministries in Eastern Canada, led a workshop entitled "Putting a vision into action." In his presentation, he outlined steps churches can take to put their mission and vision statements into action. Vandezande explained a mission or purpose statement as asking the question: "Why do we exist?" A vision statement asks: "What do we pray that God will accomplish through us; what do we expect to become? It is a picture of a preferred future."

During the discussion time, participants were asked to describe the process they went through, or are planning, to put a vision into action. They were asked what two



Gilbert Vandenheuvel, president of Diaconal Ministries Canada, presents Ben Vandezande with artwork in appreciation for 15 years of faithful service with DMC.

things went well, and where did you get stuck? Vandezande offered guidelines to the discussion time, based on the acrostic GROW. Participants were invited to choose a goal, and ask: What is the goal you are working toward? What are you trying to accomplish?

R stood for reality. Participants were asked: What is the current reality? What resources are now available? What is currently being done in this area? What have we been able to accomplish?

Options was another focus: What options can we develop to accomplish our goal? Brainstorm the possible strategies that respond to the reality and can help us achieve our goal. Who else can we work with to accomplish this goal?

"What will you recommend?" was another question asked of participants. What should be a launch strategy, and what resources will be required to accomplish this task?

Then Vandezande offered some "key principles to help get you traction" with a vision, including:

- pick your focus;
- include the congregation in the process;
- launching for early success;
- spend resources;
- planning vs. the plan;
- communicate simply.

Vandezande honored

In September, Vandezande started his new work as the regional director in Eastern

Canada for Christian Reformed Home Missions. During the Day of Encouragement, Gilbert Vandenheuvel, president of DMC, presented Vandezande with artwork entitled "And they shall inherit" — created by artist Jen Bulthuis — to honor Vandezande for 15 years of faithful service with Diaconal Ministries.

Hans Kater, the new executive director for DMC, took on his new position Nov. 5, and also took part in the Day of Encouragement.

Care for inactive members

"Caring for Inactive Members" was a workshop led by Jack Vos, a retired Christian Reformed minister living in Barrie, Ont. In his presentation, Vos offered several reasons why Christians become inactive church members, including:

- family discord;
- religiously mixed marriage;
- feeling of non-acceptance in church social groups;
- feeling unwanted, rejected, condemned;
- disagreement with a church leader (pastor, elder);
- worship and programs not relevant;
- individualism: "I can be a Christian without the church";
- doctrinal differences.

A difficulty to be aware of, Vos observed, is that inactives give the reason for withdrawal only after they have withdrawn. There is the danger of scape-goating, where the inactive member rationalizes the withdrawal, justifies self, and "proves" the correctness of the action in relation to those of "hypocritical" church members.

To shepherd inactive members, Vos suggested special listening visits by trained, gifted and motivated visitors, with these



Hans Kater, Diaconal Ministries Canada's new executive director.

guidelines:

- be gentle, don't be thrown off by defensiveness;
- listen non-defensively to criticism and anger; don't argue; empathize;
- affirm wherever possible;
- only after they bring up the subject, explore the benefits of returning;
- raise question of the hurdles to returning that they may feel;
- in your contact stay focused on Christ.

"If a person who has become inactive is ever going to reveal the real reason of becoming inactive, it will be constructively done only in a setting of trust," asserted Vos.

The one-day event also featured live "chat rooms" in which participants could gather to talk and learn more about a topic, with the help of a facilitator. Topics included: "No retirement age from service in Christ's name" and "Ways the church can pray for spiritually wandering children."



Workshops at the Day of Encouragement gave participants time for sharing, connecting and learning.



Analysis

The voice of Islam

Dr. Jan H. Boer (with Muhammad T. Ladan)

During the Cold War, anyone who dared give a positive face to the rise of the Communist movement by relating it to their struggle to free the workers from oppression was running a grave risk of all kinds of suspicions and accusations. Saying anything positive about Communism at all was regarded by many as a betrayal of the fatherland. He might be vilified as a card-carrying Communist himself.

The same danger exists today with respect to Islam. If anyone were to provide any kind of positive rationale for which the perpetrators rammed into the New York buildings, he opens himself to serious suspicion and accusations. He may be thought to have terroristic tendencies himself! He just could be a card-carrying Muslim. He might be regarded as short of the profound sorrow and deep anger the situation calls for.

Asking many questions

May I assure you that none of these hold for me. I am hardly a terrorist, though my children in their earlier stages might have been inclined to challenge that disclaimer! I am certainly not a Muslim, though I have a deep regard for many aspects of Islam and high respect for many of its adherents. As to the appropriate emotions on September 11, I was as devastated as anyone and continue to mourn for the victims. I ask many questions about the kind of people that could plan such a cruel mission with such dedication over such a long time without showing any type of remorse. And I am extremely puzzled that so many Muslim communities throughout the world rejoice at this extreme violence.

But having said that, I will take the risk of these accusations and propose that, after all, there are some legitimate concerns that place these horrible events into a context with some sort of meaning. That rationale is the West's attempt to impose secularism on the world, including the world of Islam. By "secularism" I mean that perspective that confines religion to the spiritual and the private and renders it largely irrelevant for actual life.

For over a century the West has exported secularism everywhere. It has done so through its colonial programs, through its educational efforts abroad, through its corporations, through its "development" and "foreign aid" programs,

through its political missions abroad. One of the most cutting ways in which secularism is spread today is through Western mass communication devices, especially videos exported to these countries and TV programs. In short, its entire style in Muslim countries has been secular and its message that of secularism. *That is the Western assault against which Muslims are waging war.*

I would like to be able to claim that Western missions have been an exception to this Western approach. Unfortunately, I cannot, especially not with respect to most Evangelical missions, those in the majority. The Reformed have generally had serious reservations with respect to Evangelicalism, precisely because it had bought into much of the secular inheritance of Western culture. A highly respected Reformed mission scholar, J. H. Bavinck, wrote decades ago that most missions failed to recognize their own secularism and its impact on their host societies.

It is only in the last couple of decades, since the fruits of secularism were becoming too obvious to ignore, that Evangelicals have begun to object to that perspective, but even then without always recognizing its source or nature. Evangelicals are now confessing their sins in this respect, but the damage has been done.

Ambiguous heritage

In all fairness, as a former Christian Reformed missionary, I must admit that the missionary arm of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) has absorbed much of that classic Evangelical perspective and is recently returning to a more wholistic approach only in its obedient adherence to Evangelical trends. However, Evangelical wholism is a watered-down version of the wholism of the Kuyperian tradition that has inspired so many articles in the *Christian Courier* over the years and that is paraded by Calvin College. The missionary emphasis has led to the development of Nigerian churches associated with the CRC that are no more wholistic than the churches that were born out of more openly Evangelical missions such as the Sudan Interior Mission. These CRC-related

churches are now struggling with their ambiguous heritage.

The major thrust of my discussion is based on Nigerian experience and study, rather than Afghanistan or Pakistan or some Arab country, not quite at the centre of world attention at the moment. However, the Nigerian Muslim community is a typical microcosm of the Muslim world in general in its reactions to the West in general, to Western missions and to Christianity. So, though I am discussing a different continent, the issues are much the same. From here on, then, any reference to Muslims or Islam is to the Nigerian situation unless stated otherwise.



CHRIS VAN BEEK

Islam can't tolerate secularism

Why do Muslims see secularism as such a threat? In short, to millions of Muslims, fundamentalists as well as mainstreamers, Islam is the very opposite of secularism. The two are "antithetical" to each other, a term not infrequently used by them. They cannot exist side by side. Islam simply cannot tolerate it, for it constitutes a denial of their wholistic religion.

While Islam parades itself as a comprehensive way of life covering all aspects of life, much like the Reformed used to do, secularism reduces religion to its private, personal dimension and kicks it out of the public square.

Politics, economics, education, in short, everything in the secular system is deprived of a religious impulse and must be based solely on human reason. Muslims, on the other hand, seek to base their basic principles in all these areas from their basic source, the sharia. To them religion is everything.

Why is it that Christians have made relatively easy peace with secularism, while Muslims are so hostile to it? In fact, Muslim rejection of secularism has increased sharply under the influence of both fundamentalism and the process of awakening from their colonial slumber. The reason for the difference is that secularism in the West did not represent an alien conqueror. It is a home-made product. It did not represent foreign invaders; it had local cultural roots. There was even some historical justification for it in the bloody re-

ligious wars in the West. For the Muslims, however, it was a tool of hostile invaders to subjugate them not only but to destroy their culture and religion. It has no roots in their culture.

As they seek to free themselves from remaining colonial vestiges, they have come to recognize secularism as the root of many problems they face. It pushes the "manly" religion of Islam out of the public square where it rightly belongs into the limited sphere of mosque and private life. It was an attempt to modernize Muslim cultures and to help them enter into the 20th century. It was all based on the typical secular expectation that religion would one day vanish, shrivel up and die.

Muslims are convinced that secularism is responsible for most of the world's ills. Think of anything negative or problematic in this world — imperialism, oppression, injustice, immorality, ecological problems — and secularism will be blamed for it. For this reason, Muslims are convinced that secularism cannot last forever. Allah cannot allow such a destructive force to continue indefinitely.

Hence, Muslims are sure that the West is doomed. It is only a matter of time before some calamity will overcome the West, especially its current leader, the USA. One writer, I. I. Bello, in an imaginary telephone discussion with President Bush Sr., wrote over a decade ago, back in 1989, "For us, at this end, it is clear that America is bound to a doom. Unless some one rescues it, no doubt in a few decades to come it will be wiped out of history."

Voice of a Nigerian

I want you to listen to the voice of another Nigerian, Muhammad Tawafiq Ladan, a Muslim who similarly represents the global Muslim community. I could have chosen many other writers, some much more recent ones. However, the sidebar article, like Bello's quoted above, was written 12 years ago. The warning he uttered has been repeated time and again and yet the West has refused to take this warning seriously.

September 11 was meant as a cruel shock treatment for the West to open its eyes and ears. The accompanying article is not hindsight but foresight of more than a decade. The author did not know what type of an explosion would take place, but he was sure something would happen somewhere along the line, for the pressure had already been building up at that

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Analysis

The voice of Islam

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time. Amazing that it has not been heard and taken seriously.

If no one else, missions should have considered it their task to interpret these warnings and all that anger, but they occupied themselves by concentrating on

planting churches, ignoring the anti-secularist message of their gospel. They thereby played right into the hands of the secularist agenda and almost totally marginalized themselves into irrelevance.

But perhaps Western failure to

heed the warnings and understand the anger is not so amazing after all. Secularism, as Ladan writes, has always been peculiarly deaf and insensitive to religion. Religion was basically thought of as something we would outgrow in due time. While it is still with us,

we must tolerate it but reduce its impact as much as possible by privatizing it.

Secularists deaf to Christians

North American Christians know something about that as well. Paul Marshall, formerly of the Institute for Christian Studies, in his book *Their Blood Cries Out*, complains bitterly that American secularists appear totally deaf to Christians. Secularists have built up an almost impregnable philosophical wall that has made it very difficult for them to take the Christian religion seriously. They have rendered themselves deaf and blind with their proud claims of neutrality and objectivity. Muslims have the same complaints.

Please read attentively the accompanying article by Ladan, "Ladan's warning." May I call it prophetic? I am aware, of course, of the total lack of self-criticism on the part of Ladan. One would never guess from the article that Muslim countries are not always shining examples of democracy. Few of us would want to trade countries or political systems with them.

Condemning in others what they do

It is also good to remember that Muslims condemn in others what they feel perfectly free to do themselves. They complain about the imposition of alien perspectives, but they arrogate to themselves the right, the duty even, of imposing a Muslim perspective on others.

The English of the article may not always be acceptable to you. However, try to ignore those elements and concentrate on the warning that Ladan and many fellow Muslim writers since then have been uttering.

I have been working on a book to draw the world's attention to this warning. Alas, I have been too slow. But perhaps this time around, the warnings will be taken more seriously so that policies and attitudes towards Muslims may change drastically from a narrow secularism to a more comprehensive approach that includes recognition of religion as a significant factor in all cultural affairs, particularly the religion of Islam.

Communism can be considered a reaction to oppression of the workers in the Western world. Those responsible for that oppression must be held at least partially responsible for the horrors that Communism has unleashed. Karl Barth, rightly or wrongly, is reported to have blamed Martin

Luther and his followers for the horrors of Naziism because of Luther's two-kingdom theory that deprived German politics from a more Biblical impulse.

I believe that we can call all supporters and adherents of secularism on the carpet with respect to the current anger in the heart of Islam and the subsequent recent explosion of that anger. That group includes hordes of Christians who have adhered to it partially, even missionaries. *September 11 is at least partially the result of the anger and frustration caused by a century or more of Western imposition of secularism on the Muslim world.*

Not the only monsters

Perhaps the dead victims of September 11 will be recognized in the future as victims in the struggle against the monster of secularism. Terrorists are monsters without doubt, but they are not the only monsters around. If the West, especially the leader, the U.S.A., will heed this very concrete warning, then something good may yet come out of this unspeakable tragedy.

What is needed, among other things, is a confession of guilt and a rejection of secularism as totally unreal and impossible, along with the recognition of the legitimate and real concerns of religion and spirituality beyond the "sphere of religion" and the private. There were already some serious literary and philosophical signs before September 11 that a turn in that direction has started, but it was only in the halls of academia. Hopefully this tragedy will serve to speed up the process by having brought it right down into the streets of the world where real life takes place.

It is not only the secularists in power who have to change course drastically in their relationship to the Muslim world; Christians need to change as well. The latter's flirtation with secularism has to end. A new and radically Biblical wholism must infuse the Christian community that will return religion back to the public square.

Christian Courier has over the years been inspired by the neo-Calvinism that has been associated with the name Abraham Kuyper. Kuyper promoted a school of thought and action that is radically wholistic in its approach to the world in that it seeks to subject all of culture to the Lordship of Christ. Already this school of thought is gaining the attention of Christians in many countries who

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Ladan's warning

Muhammed T. Ladan

For many decades now Muslim voices of discontent have come only in the form of whispers, scarcely capable of being heard by secular regimes more readily to be attracted by voices which promise opportunities of self-aggrandisement and personal wealth. Secular regimes, themselves an alien imposition, have always displayed an astonishing ignorance of the people over whom they exercise control; and they almost invariably are incapable of reading the signs on the wall. Whether such signs are written in such casual incidents as student riots or the more spectacular one as general uprising, it comes to them as a surprise.

Perhaps there is sense to some interest in having regimes whose ears are more attuned to the melodies of secular life — with its infinite promises of worldly glory and sexual pleasures. And of the voices representing the more sober and weighty concerns of life, the servants of the world have no interest, or cannot indeed understand. Such regimes are therefore, as a rule, unstable, or in the language of Islam, they are merely like the webs the spider weaves. A government cannot be sustained by self-enrichment, self-glory and pleasures, and this is a matter known to all civilised people; but insecure regimes offer an advantage to some powerful nations.

And so it is that the deafening sound of secularism has prevented regime after regime from hearing the whispers of Muslims, the voice of a people who have a genuine cause to be aggrieved. Government policies and thinking have consistently assumed that Nigeria in its totality is secular and that all people have accepted European civilization as their own. The logical inference of such assumptions is that Muslims do not exist, or if they do exist, they no longer believe in Islam as civilization and way of life.

To say that this is an unforgivable fallacy is indeed to understate the true state of affairs. Muslims have never failed to register their rejection of the imposed civilisa-

tion; it is rather the secular regimes which have failed to understand the language of the Muslims.

For example, Muslims have relentlessly advocated a complete restoration of the sacred sharia; they have asked for a system of education based on Islamic principles for their children; they have affirmed so many times and in many ways that politics is an integral part of Islam, not separable from it.

These for anyone imbued with clear insight amount to a rejection, albeit subtle, of the beliefs and traditions of secularism. Yet governments have chosen to ignore the Muslim voice. Instead, they tend to intensify propaganda aimed at convincing Muslims to abandon Islam and revert to unbelief; to abandon the sharia in favor of the imposed all, all in the name of Nigeria.

Adding insult to injury

All that governments have achieved so far is merely to continue to add insult to the injury. Certainly Muslims will continue to remain Muslims even if every house is turned into a radio station for propaganda. The reasons are obvious. Islam is a religion of conscience; it asks man to worship no one but his creator alone; to obey no one but the Absolute Supreme Authority; not to dehumanize himself by engaging in scandalous affluence and pleasure; to be committed absolutely to justice and fairness; and finally to always keep in mind the coming of the Ultimate Day in which, in the words of the Quran,

"You will be brought back to Allah, then every soul will be paid in full that which it has earned, and they will not be wronged."

Islam has its own laws, which because they flow precisely from their faith, Muslims find them natural to obey and apply. Islam is a civilization which throughout its history, has uplifted Muslims and made them masters. Above all, Islam gives meaning and purpose to life, far nobler, far more dignifying than the debasing and corrupting influence of secular life.

As a religion of conscience, Islam cannot but be concerned about the social and economic conditions of the people and government's response to people's fundamental needs. Serious-minded Muslims are certainly worried that the pillars of secular government exercise no sense of restraint and responsibility at all. At a time when the nation is overwhelmed by poverty and severe deprivation, they beautify their persons, magnify their glory, consolidate their "economic base" more energetically, even as they send government functionaries to invade the homes of the poor, or waylay them on the highway to dispossess them in the name of taxation. Surely there is limit to unfairness and brazen insensitivity.

Nor will Islam be at ease in the face of continuous erosion of the supreme values of society. Television stations have refused to acknowledge their responsibility to society, even to the impressionable children, to whom we will eventually entrust this nation. Just to obtain money they put up advertisements, which even in their own personal judgments are offensive to the human conscience.

But more importantly to the nation, because it is of far reaching consequences, is the fact that secular rulers cannot offer practical examples of moral probity, honesty, self-discipline, modesty and, above all, a sense of accountability for the rest of the people to emulate.

Now with the emergence of the Council of Ulama, the Muslim voice is no longer a whisper; it is being articulated and magnified, and the issues between Islam and secularism are being clarified. The secular regimes may decide to ignore this serious and, by all standards, formidable voice, trusting in its coercive power and tools of persuasion. But as long as Islam retains the unshakable loyalty of the conscience of the Muslims, it is the secular power that will have cause to blame itself for its deafness. The voice of Islam cannot be stilled.

After the Buzzer

Tim Anniades



Universal moments

When I saw what happened in the ninth inning of the World Series, I just about took the living room apart in my joy. Could anything have been more perfect? The Arizona Diamondbacks, after losing two spirit-crushing games in the last inning, came back in the final inning of game seven to beat the Yankees by one run. After it hit me what had happened, I jumped around the room. Lamp shades trembled. Plaster fell from the ceiling.

My scorn for sports dynasties like that of the New York Yankees is long-standing. I hold a very special sneering contempt for rich, spoiled, arrogant organizations like the Yankees who buy championships like they're sports cars. What joy to see their demise in such a dramatic finish!

I'm getting a little carried away, but I'm only exaggerating slightly. Once in a great while, I have an out-of-body sports experience. Everything in the sports universe comes together in those moments — justice, beauty, grace, hope. The endless nonsense of sports politics and hype disappears and you're left with a measure of joy. Such was the case in game seven. The Diamondbacks had been discounted and yet had worked so hard against the Yankees. They had lost two games in the final moments after giving everything they had. And then in the final chapter, there was redemption.

I know it's just a stupid game, but hear me out. Our souls crave moments of perfection. We desperately want to see justice and pure beauty in our lives, partly because there are so few of those moments in our earthly lives. That's why I love shows like *Cops*. I like seeing somebody who's broken the law get taken down. I don't care what anybody says about that being "depraved." I crave justice. And there are times in my life when sports have provided some really joyful, powerful moments when things seemed to work together perfectly.

If that sounds superficial, I make no apologies. I doubt if it's that much different from the reason many people like watching movies. Two miserable people find love and a happy life together. The end-of-the-road boxer breaks out of a life of crime and poverty to become a hero. The abused wife changes her identity and starts a new, born-again life. Sometimes these make for cheesy shows, but they provide some moments of perfection.

Of course, we are essentially craving something that only our Lord can bring through his restoring power. I acknowledge that. But that's at the root of why we desire redeeming moments so much.

Here's a list of what I think would be the 10 most perfect moments in professional sports:

1. The Vancouver Canucks beat the Leafs in game seven of the Stanley Cup Finals in the Air Canada Centre.
2. A class action lawsuit is filed against the World Wrestling Federation for insulting the collective IQs of spectators.
3. Mike Keenan gets demoted to stick boy for the Columbus Blue Jackets.
4. The Saskatchewan Rough Riders start a five-year Grey Cup dynasty.
5. Tiger Woods breaks his contract with Nike and dresses non-corporate.
6. The Chicago Cubs win the World Series. In New York.
7. The Canucks beat the Habs in quatre jeux dans la Centre Molson to win the Cup.
8. The Winnipeg Jets and the Quebec Nordiques are re-born.
9. The B.C. Lions win the Grey Cup with an all-Canadian lineup.
10. The NBA caps salaries at 300 G's and requires teams to give a profit-shared percentage to their bored fans.

Hey, I can dream can't I?



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Old Man Runner

Barbara Donnelly Lane

I met him at one of those sub-urb barbeques: neighbors milling around the grill amidst thick smells of cooking hamburgers and bug spray. He was hunched in his plastic chair like an old bird perched in its nest, blending into the scenery as benignly as the lawn furniture. He nodded his gray head almost imperceptibly in greeting as I took a seat and promptly forgot all about him. I was munching on a potato chip, watching my son running across the yard, when the old man spoke.

"Did you run in that race?" he asked. I jumped at the sound of his voice. I glanced around to make certain he was speaking to me.

"Which race?" I asked. He pointed with his Coke bottle to the bold graphics on the front of my Peachtree Road Race T-shirt. The Peachtree is a summer tradition for runners in Atlanta, and I had pounded out the 6.2 miles with the rest of them.

"Yes," I smiled. "I run as much as I can."

"I know," he nodded. His eyes were a bleary blue, and he reminded me suddenly of my grandfather.

"You do?" I asked. I knew I had never met him before though he must live in one of the houses on the street.

"Oh, yes," he said. "I watch you running with your dog almost every morning."

"You do?" I said again. He looked harmless enough with his white socks pulled up past his calves, his skinny legs pale and exposed in tan shorts, but any man peeping at me from behind window blinds without my knowledge made me nervous.

"Your stride is all wrong. Inefficient. You keep your feet pointed



"Your stride is all wrong. Inefficient. You keep your feet pointed out."

out. Like a running duck."

"I do?" I wasn't quite sure how to react to this unsolicited assessment.

"I used to coach track, you know."

"You did?" I was beginning to sound to myself like a skipping record only letting out two words at a time.

"Oh, yes," he said. "What's more, I've completed over twenty marathons."

"No way!"

"No way!" I said. He nodded proudly, and something about his expression looked suddenly familiar to me. Age had dropped away from his spirit, and I knew he was thinking about great distances conquered, races run in his past.

I introduced myself properly and learned his name. "Do you still run, Joe?"

"Only in my mind," he said. He glanced disdainfully at a brown cane I had not noticed lying like a petrified snake beside his feet in the grass. "Bad hip. Now I swim."

"Swimming's fun," I said. He gave me a reproachful look that set us both to laughing. Serious runners have serious addictions to the slap of feet against concrete, the strain needed to push up that last hill.

"Well, I'll run for both of us, Joe," I said, lifting my cup in a toast.

"Only if you fix your form," he said. I laughed again at Old Man Runner, knowing then this unexpected friend had plenty of things to teach me.

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The voice of Islam

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recognize it as a viable alternative to the watered-down version of Christianity that missionaries have bequeathed them.

In the U.S.A. it is especially Charles Colson who waves Kuyper's Stone Lectures at many of his audiences as containing serious answers to the problems of America and its Christians. The Kuyperian alternative is the only version of Christianity that has such close wholistic parallels to the concerns of Muslims.

The words of John Vriend, a translator of Dutch Kuyperian classics, continue to echo in my

heart when he hesitantly suggested that the 21st century may well become the real century of Kuyper.

Now, in the midst of our current crisis, is the time for the heirs of Kuyper to stand up and be counted. It is the time for the alternative wholism of that tradition to be offered promptly and sincerely to Muslims, secularists and fellow Christians alike.

This may be the day for which the Lord has called this tradition into being. Will the sleepy and somewhat embarrassed heirs of Kuyper please wake up from their slumber and hear the call of this desperate hour?

Note:

The article, "The Voice of Islam" by Muhammad T. Ladan appeared in *The Pen*. Kano, Nigeria: Bureau for Islamic Propagation, February 27, 1989. The article by I.I. Bello appeared in the same issue.

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Opinion

Mary's anointment of the feet of Jesus and allusion to the Song of Songs (1)

Love is one of the most basic and vital aspects of human life. Yet, love often seems intangible and difficult to express into words. Often the use of imagination and evocative images are required to express the full meaning of love. Such an evocative strategy is used in the story which describes how Mary anoints the feet of Jesus. This is done by way of an allusion to the Song of Songs. I would like to suggest that Mary's anointing of Jesus' feet can be placed in a framework of love in all the multifaceted splendor of love.

At the end of his public ministry, six days before the Passover, Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem for the third and last time. He stops at Bethany, where they "made him a supper (John 12:1)." It seems very likely that Jesus upon his return to Bethany, is invited for a meal in the house of his friends — Mary, Martha and Lazarus — a private place, where no one will follow the order of the chief priests and Pharisees to let them know where Jesus is. Spotlighted is that Martha serves, that Lazarus is at table with him, that Mary takes a pound of expensive ointment and anoints the feet of Jesus and wipes them with her hair. Judas proclaims that money is wasted here, thereby devaluing both Jesus and Mary's gesture. Judas is immediately denounced by the narrator and depicted as a hypocrite and a thief. Jesus responds to Judas, by saying: "Leave her alone, let her keep it for the day of my burial. The poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me."

The full expression of love

The narrative of Mary's anointing of Jesus' feet has been interpreted by commentators in various ways — not always from a positive perspective. I will describe a number of these interpretations and then show that the anointment of Mary may be seen as an act of the full expression of love.

What was the meaning of the gesture of anointing? It has been suggested that Mary's gesture represented an act of mourning prior to Jesus' death, or that Mary anointed Jesus out of gratitude, because he brought Lazarus back to life. Another interpretation is that Mary acknowledges the kingship of Jesus by her act, because she anoints him shortly before the crowd hailed Jesus as the King of Israel. As well, it is said that Mary may be fulfilling the role of the ideal disciple in advance. In the following chapter (John 13), Jesus washes the feet of his disciples and then asks them to do the same for each other. Commentators show several comparisons: the odor of the dead Lazarus to the fragrance of the nard, or the love of Mary for Jesus versus the betrayal of Judas. In passing, a few mention the allusion to the Song of Songs in this narrative. This interpretation would cast Mary in the role of the woman lover. It is this interpretation I will develop further.

First, I want to reflect on the meaning of the loose hair and the ritual of footwashing. The fact that Mary used her hair to dry the feet of Jesus has had various interpretations: that loosening one's hair was an act of loose morals (however, Mary was considered virtuous; though nowhere is it explained why); that Mary's act was impulsive and ill considered; that it was a very public act (though having a meal with friends is actually quite

a private activity).

Footwashing was a routine matter of cleanliness and hospitality. Upon the arrival of guests the host provided water and sometimes oil, for the guests to wash and soothe their feet, especially before sharing a meal. It was considered a menial task, usually performed by slaves. A few sources reveal that children or students washed and anointed their parents' or teachers' feet thus showing their devotion.

I would like to suggest that Mary's anointing of the feet of Jesus and drying his feet with her loose hair was an act of love. I am suggesting that this story may be looked at from the framework of love rather than the framework of humility or servanthood.

The meaning of loose hair

I would like to draw attention to examples from literature which substantiate this perspective. In many cultures loose hair was a sign of mourning. Loose and unbound hair was also a sign of ecstatic endowment with the spirit and therefore an expression of prophetic behavior. In Greek epic, rich free flowing hair of women was a sign of vitality and fertility. As well and almost universally, the hair of young girls was left flowing free. When looking at the story from these perspectives, the conclusions can be drawn that Mary was a young unmarried woman and/or that she wore her hair loose for two reasons: as a sign of mourning or as a sign of prophetic behavior.

The act of footwashing can also be interpreted as an expression of love. In specific readings, it has been noted that a woman is said to prefer to be a slave washing the feet of her beloved rather than enduring separation from him. It is also known that anointings were performed by wives for their husbands, before and after sexual intercourse. There are other examples in the literature which depict that washing feet is an expression of love.

I do not want to contest that Mary's act was not born out of gratitude or that it may not have had prophetic overtones. However, it is my view that traditional interpreters have left little room for the potential of the sacred in the physical. They have shunned placing a positive value on the physical act of the anointing. Instead commentators have tended to resort to the age old linkage between women, sexuality and shame. Moreover, interpreters have been very hesitant to acknowledge any form of passion concerning the body of Jesus.

I believe that because John 12:3 contains an allusion to Song of Songs 1:12 that the anointing of Jesus by Mary can be placed in the framework of love in the full meaning of that concept.

In the next column I will further substantiate my claim and also explain the meaning of the word allusion.

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Anyone who would like to contribute to this column is invited to contact Vicky Van Andel via fax at 1-780-473-0970 or e-mail at: vanandel@onnet.com.

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Surviving the fear factor

Jennifer Jacoby-Smith

Since the attacks of September 11, fear is everywhere. Parents worry about sending their children to school. Commuters worry about the bridges they have to cross. Shoppers worry about safety in malls. Workers in highrise office buildings suddenly cast wary glances at the sky. Those who live near nuclear power plants are planning routes of escape — just in case. With new anthrax scares popping up every day, the simple task of opening the mail brings its own brand of fear. It's a scenario few ever envisioned.

As North Americans we've known comfort like no other generation. Now we know fear like we never dreamed we could. We've seen the unfathomable — passenger jets used as weapons against ordinary citizens going about their normal work days. With F-18s overhead and Armed Forces in the airports, we are well aware that our pre-September 11 life is gone forever.

Our leaders urge us to get back to work, back to our barely recognizable lives. We mustn't give in to terror and let the extremists win the war, they urge. But the war has no specific geographical location, no real front and therefore no zone of safety. An attack could come at anytime anywhere, and the threat of an attack seems to be as immobilizing as any attack itself.

Fear can paralyze us

Fear is a natural reaction to the images of September 11. However, fear can paralyze us and we must not let it. How can we as Christians keep it from overwhelming us?

Dr. Richard Dobbins, a noted Christian psychologist from Akron, Ohio, advises, "We must accept this present climate of risk and danger as the environment in which we must go about the business of our daily lives and believe God to give us the courage to confront it." Dobbins adds that we need to take our focus off our fear. He compares our lives to a picture with some subjects in clear focus and other background objects fuzzy and indistinct. "You and I must stay focused on the daily activities of our lives and keep fear in the background."

Keeping fears in perspective

Dobbins also notes, "The likelihood that you will have your life disrupted by a terrorist is much less than the risk you take when you get into an automobile and drive down the streets and highways of your community." Applying this kind

of logic can help us to normalize our fears and keep them in perspective.

Another way to normalize our fears is to contemplate what our lives would be like if we allowed fear to consume us. Would we leave our homes? Would we allow our children to? Would we want to live like that? Ultimately, that is the goal of terrorism. "The purpose of the terrorists is to paralyze nations by affecting a relatively small segment of society," says Dobbins.

Daily diet of worry

In North America we've been so insulated by our comforts that our current fears have left a bitter taste in our mouths. There are those among us, however, who've known a daily diet of worry. In the housing projects of Chicago, for instance, drive-by shootings and gang violence are common place. I recently interviewed Mr. Bob Muzikowski, author of *Safe At Home* — the true story behind the movie *Hardball*. Every day people ask him what a successful white businessman is doing living and coaching Little League baseball in the projects of Chicago. After all, he can afford to live in a safer place.

Muzikowski shrugs off their inquiries. "Do not fear," it's in the Scripture so many times," he replies. "[Jesus] doesn't say, 'Do not fear, unless you have 2.3 children and then run for the hills.'"

Muzikowski has had his share of close calls, but he'd rather be in the trenches of the impoverished sections of Chicago closer to the needy than living in safety somewhere else. He leaves fear in the background and focuses on connecting with his family and the Little Leaguers he coaches.

Christians throughout the ages have faced persecutions and torture simply for their belief in Jesus Christ. But was fear a factor? Or were they utterly convinced that God would use everything, even their death, to His glory and ultimate design? Perhaps a healthy combination of both.

"Do not fear those who kill the body..."

In the New Testament, Jesus offers comfort for those who live in fear: "And do not fear those who kill the body, but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Matthew 10:28 (NASB).

Psalm 118:6 also says, "The Lord is for me; I will not fear; what can man do to me?" Our fear of mortal man for the harm that can

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Opinion/Media

Churches could lose charitable status if rules not followed

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charitable purposes. Could what happened to them happen to one of our churches?

When the whistle blew

When the whistle blew on the AIDS Society, the first thing that happened was that Canada Customs and Revenue Agency revoked their charitable registration number. Arguably, the most financially devastating thing that could happen to any charity. Without this, donors receive no tax benefit. Remarkably, the reason the AIDS Society's charitable number was revoked was not revealed to the public. CCRA has the sole discretion in Canada to decide what organization will enjoy charitable status. When they make a decision, they do not publicize the reasons. If a charity has its registration taken away, they can ask for the number to be reinstated, but it is up to CCRA to decide if they are going to do so. There is no requirement that you be entitled to a hearing, to state your case as to why you should have a charitable number, to rebut CCRA's objections, or to appeal to a court to review their decision.

Too much power?

Even Mr. Justice Haley, in ruling on the AIDS Society case, made no attempt to interfere with CCRA's authority to grant charitable registration numbers. Many argue this gives CCRA too much power, with little or no accountability. This may be true, but it is therefore unwise to engage in civil disobedience, for one has limited, if any, recourse when a charitable number is revoked.

The second alarming thing is that when the court ruled against the AIDS Society, it held the organization itself, and its directors, accountable — and not just accountable for what the AIDS Society collected, but also for what it paid to the fund-raisers. Hence, the organization, and each director

sitting on the board of the organization, is now liable for almost one million dollars collected. Gone are the days where a director of a charity can snore through meetings, rubber stamping decisions. Charitable organizations, and those who are responsible for them, have real duties to the public to ensure that they operate in compliance with charitable law. If they fail to do so, they can be directly answerable.

The third alarming thing is how this problem arose in the first place. The AIDS Society was held accountable for its transgressions because someone complained. For those of you who think that our churches will never be subject to this kind of disciplinary action, just remember that all it takes is a complaint. It doesn't take an expensive, time consuming court action, a referendum, an election or a crusade. All it takes is a simple complaint, and you've got a serious problem.

Churches should shudder

Instead of hiding behind a false sense of security because this did not happen to a church, I think churches should shudder. In my perception, much of the secular world views Christians with disdain, thinking they are weak, behind the times, unsophisticated and unintelligent, and so on. The AIDS Society probably ranks higher on many political totem poles than most Christian causes. Yet, the AIDS Society was targeted here. Christians who think we are beyond reproach because we have not yet been targeted are naive.

Do not misunderstand me. I am not saying that, in the face of obstacles raised by our governments, we should throw all religious traditions to the wind. Most religious traditions are good. Some, although not all, are biblically based. Civil disobedience may be appropriate in circumstances where there is clear injustice, but this is not one of those cases. Churches or

clergy who feel threatened by the principle that ministers should not serve on their governing body misunderstand the merits of this law. To remove ministers from their governing boards distances them

from accusations of breach of trust or conflict of interest. Those churches which have chosen to comply will attest to the minimal practical impact of this law and that, rather than being a hindrance,

it is, in fact, an improvement for both ministers and congregation alike.

David van der Woerd is a lawyer with Ross & McBride in Hamilton, Ont.

Vietnam's evangelicals find legal recognition does not mean freedom

Special to Compass Direct

After 25 years of being alternately harassed, ignored and persecuted, the Evangelical Church of Vietnam (South), or ECVN, was granted legal recognition by Vietnamese authorities in April 2001. Seven months later, it is clear that legal recognition does not mean more freedom. In fact, many church leaders and those who follow human rights issues in Vietnam believe the church's situation is worse than before.

The authorities are using the granting of legal recognition as a means of exercising the control they could not exercise in previous years. A provision of the new church constitution is the establishment by the ECVN of a committee of three representatives in each province. The authorities, who have often vetoed one or more of the church's nominees, have approved only one third of the committees. Invariably, those vetoed are independent and outspoken. The ECVN has also not had any positive reply to its requests to open a theological training school and to print Christian literature. Anything done in these crucial areas must still be done discreetly, without government permission.

A major shortcoming of the legalization procedure was that it did not appear to cover the minority tribal Christians historically part of the ECVN (South). They make up at least two-thirds of the entire church. This was partially because the authorities blamed the churches for an uprising earlier this year, when thousands of Christians participated in demonstrations against the illegal loss of their land and lack of freedom to worship and live according to their faith.

Now, as the authorities grudgingly grant the ECVN connections with the tribal churches, they decide which few will be permitted to meet. All others, which functioned quietly for years, are now made officially illegal, and there is a new crackdown against them.

In some areas, such as Quang Ngai province where there have been many ECVN (South) churches of the Hre minority for years, the tribal churches are now



COURTESY VOICE OF THE MARTYRS

A Vietnamese Christian youth group meets secretly in a forest.

called illegal by the authorities. In the same province, three ethnic Vietnamese ECVN churches on the coast, which have existed for 40 years, are no longer allowed to exist. All this in the context of granting legal recognition!

Authorities use devious means to divide leaders

The authorities also continue devious means to try to divide the leadership of the ECVN (South).

Permission and means were recently granted to a few "government-friendly" pastors on the margins of the ECVN leadership to convene irregular meetings of pastors at seaside and mountain resorts. An article in the *Ngaoi Lao Dong (The Worker)* newspaper on September 25 quotes the Rev. Tran Ba Thanh of the Nguyen Tri Phuong Church in Ho Chi Minh City as saying, "We pray that we (Christians) will be the salt of the earth and the light of the world, and that we will live in the land of Vietnam to bring glory to the Lord, therefore we are not in agreement with the 'Vietnam Human Rights Act' passed by the Congress of the United States." Such a statement uses an evangelical pastor to communicate to the public that the ECVN is against human rights in Vietnam. Most church leaders are disgusted with this statement.

The campaign to "reduce and eliminate" Christianity among the Hmong minority continues unabated. New secret Communist Party of Vietnam documents brought out of Vietnam and dated in May 2001 make this abundantly clear. A new list of 16 Hmong Christian prisoners has also been brought out of Vietnam, with the

news that it does not include a number of Hmong just arrested in October.

House church organizations seeing these developments are understandably leery about the "benefits" of legal recognition that some of them have been seeking. Several house church organizations report a stronger wave of harassment against them in recent weeks. Some 40 leaders of one group, meeting at a retreat in Vung Tau, were arrested and held in mid-October. Their ID cards were confiscated while they were being interrogated.

Some longtime meeting places in homes have been shut down. Earlier this year, some 50 Christian students who were on a mission to help the very poor in Ba Rai, Vung Tau, were arrested, roughed up and a report was made against them. A camera and film were seized. The Rev. Nguyen Hong Quang in Binh Khanh Ward, of District 2 in Ho Chi Minh City, was given an ultimatum in early October to shut down his house church and his welfare activities on behalf of slum children.

The passing by the U.S. Congress of the Bilateral Trade Agreement with Vietnam was followed promptly in Vietnam by the sentencing of Catholic priest Father Nguyen Van Ly to 15 years in prison. This proved Nguyen's simple accusation — for which he was sentenced — that Vietnam does not have religious freedom.

It seems clear to careful observers that while world attention is focused elsewhere, Vietnam is taking the opportunity to step up its dirty work against innocent religious believers.

Surviving the fear factor

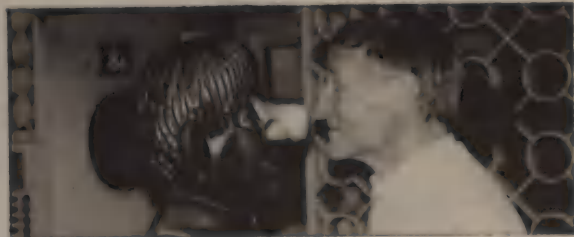
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come to our bodies is misplaced. Indeed what can man (even a heavily armed extremist with hatred in his heart) do to us that God hasn't already foreseen?

Whether it is a new terrorist threat from abroad or the daily anxieties of 21st century life, learning to make fear a part of our lives will allow us to win the daily war on fear. Over and over God encourages us to "not fear." He's promised to protect us, but also to

use our circumstances for His purposes. And while we may never know the comfort and safety we've grown accustomed to, we can trust that He's got the whole situation under his awesome unfathomable control. As Muzikowski points out we must have faith that, "The bad guys will always get tired before the good guys."

Jennifer Jacoby-Smith is a freelance writer living in Saskatoon, Sask.

News Comment



Bert Hielema

WHEN A FRIEND recommended *The Fourth Turning*, subtitled "An American Prophecy," I bought it somewhat reluctantly. Frankly, I don't trust our modern day diviners too much: too many prophetic books turn out to be wrong. One of the most reliable things in the world is human unreliability and their predictions. (Mine included, of course).

The book's main thrust is that history moves in cycles: every 20-25 years there is a different phase, called Turning. The different periods roughly correspond with the old Dutch line: "*Opgaan, blinken en verzingen, is het lot dat ieder wacht.*" (Rise, Shine, Decline is the fate of everyone), except that this book has four stages: (1) High: an upbeat era of strengthening institutions and weakening individualism, when a new civic order takes root and the old values regime decays; (2) Awakening: a passionate era of spiritual upheaval, when the civic order comes under attack from a new values regime; (3) Unraveling: a downcast era of strengthening individualism and weakening institutions, when the old civic order decays and the new values regime takes root, and (4): the Fourth Turning, the Crisis, a time of upheaval, when the old is replaced with the new.

The authors claim that the next crisis, the Fourth Turning, is due somewhere in the next four years. This means that we now experience a period of "unraveling." And, true, we are seeing this today: institutions are weakening, declining in all areas of life — witness failing health care, struggling

family life, disoriented churches, increasing inequality, falling educational standards, economic disarray, disappearing democracy, chaotic air and road transport, tempestuous weather, and — the book is geared to the U.S. Market — diminishing welfare and unemployment benefits, just to name the more obvious.

MY INITIAL MISGIVINGS turned to grudging agreement, when the authors postulated that a cataclysmic event would signal the start of a new era of drastic decline. They did not expect this to happen until 2005 or so, give or take a few years. But it may have already happened, on 9/11, well ahead of schedule. Do we see a speeding up of history here?

In other words, suddenly people are caught off guard and by surprise, and a new phase, the Crisis phase, may have begun, especially evident in economic decline.

This book is not alone in forecasting a severe malaise. It so happened that last year my Stratfor Intelligence Report, in its projection for the next decade, also mentioned the year 2005 as a likely date for a possible turnaround. About that time, retiring boomers will start to withdraw their savings, something that may happen now, with growing unemployment and many jobs suddenly eliminated and with many being told to take early retirement.

ANOTHER BOOK, popular a decade ago, has the telling title of *The Great Reckoning*, *How the world will change in the depression of the 1990s*. Of course, there

was no depression in the '90s, exactly the opposite. The advent of Information Technology changed possible doom into a boom. Curiously this book, too, mentions cycles, but much longer ones: 1,000 years each. The millennium before the birth of Christ was a period of gradual growth. At the very top of this cycle, when the Pax Romana held sway everywhere, Christ appeared and the gospel spread relatively unimpeded.

The next five centuries saw a gradual decline, culminating in the fall of Rome in the late fifth century, when Rome was snuffed out by hordes of barbarians that seemed to collect from all points of the northern hemisphere. In the next 500 years, Western Europe saw a deep descent into barbarism, when commerce and public order collapsed in what we now know as the Dark Ages.

Then, around the year 1000, history notes an upturn again: first five centuries of slow revival, now curiously known as the Middle Ages — assuming, I suppose, that we are now in the End Ages — which brought a rebirth of social mobility, early signs of self-expression, followed by the 500 years, which culminated in the current capitalistic system.

THE YEAR 2000 IS A significant threshold. If there is a pattern in this millennial cycle, then we are now at a peak, just as two millennia ago, when Christ appeared, and the world enjoyed unprecedented globalized circumstances, the *summum bonum* (highest good) of prosperity in antiquity. If there had been a stock market at that time, it would have been the time to sell, quite like last year, when the Dow Jones and especially the Nasdaq were at their top levels ever. This book, about 10 years old now, ends with a peculiar and prescient sentence: "We can notice the terrorists with the hand-held missiles, the build-up of debt, the eclipse of another empire, the technical signs of a long economic upturn winding down. These developments all point to a slump ahead. Let us hope it is no worse than a slump."

Perhaps I am reading the wrong stuff. In a book, soberly titled, *Living Within Limits*, Garret Hardin writes that "Diseconomies of scale are the rule. We naturally exploit the economies first — the stuff easy to reach at the least cost — and increasingly we are left with the diseconomies." On page 100, he has a graph with the horizontal line indicating the Units of Effort, and the vertical line the Per Capita

Production. The initial production starts low, then reaches Economies of Scale; the Optimum is indicated by a plateau, which after awhile approaches the Brink, signaling the start of Diseconomies of Scale, which end in Disaster. Again Rise, Shine, Decline.

THIS FITS IN WITH WHAT I pointed out two weeks ago in Joseph Tainter's *The Collapse of Complex Societies*, in which he says that disintegration is built into the process of civilization itself. In a hunter-gathering society, the members of the tribe had an easy choice: when a resource shortage developed they moved further afield. But we live in a full world, where there no longer is Terra Incognita, Unknown Place. We are committed to stay put and so we go vertical, create another level of control to solve our problems — a process that never ends. Taxes rarely go down. Information processing gets denser. Bureaucracies grow. Elites get a bigger slice, and as complexity increases, costs go up, benefits drop and collapse is not only inevitable but becomes economical. That's why the Lord has ordered a New Earth for us. The old order, with its pollution, junk everywhere, contaminated water supply, foul air, soiled earth, can never regain its pristine state without a total collapse and complete renewal.

In 1974 I bought a book by Robert L. Heilbroner, with the ambitious title: *An Inquiry into the Human Prospect*. His conclusion is that "The industrial growth process, so central to the economic and social life of Capitalism and Western Socialism alike, will be forced to slow down, in all likelihood within a generation or two, and will probably have to give way to decline thereafter (p. 129)." Concludes this highly esteemed author, who is the Norman Thomas Professor of Economics at the New School for Social Research: "If then by the question 'Is there hope for man?' we ask whether it is possible to meet the challenges of the future without the payment of a fearful price, the answer must be: No, there is no such hope." Has the time to pay the price come?

So here we are a generation after he wrote this and along comes "the Fourth Turning." Perhaps this is a book whose time has come, as its thesis is supported by many other sources as well. So we must weigh the possibility that we are in for a potentially devastating period which could last a decade or more.

A while ago I bought an

interesting book, in which I found a prediction. In *From Atlantis to the Sphinx, Recovering the Lost Wisdom of the Ancient World*, the author, Colin Wilson, mentions that on December 22, 2012 the next Mayan cycle will end, which means that the sun's magnetic field will again reverse, causing tremendous stress on earth. I don't believe in astrology. I do believe that, like the Three Wise Men who came to visit Jesus, and followed the Star, the universe is an integrated whole, where also the stars have a definite place of service. What that is, I don't know.

The Fourth Turning, written in 1998, says that "armed confrontation usually occurs around the climax of Crisis. This could be any kind of war, class war, sectional war, war against global anarchist or terrorists, or superpower war. If there is war, it is likely to culminate in total war. And if there is a total war it is likely that the most destructive weapons available will be deployed."

This, too, could be correct. Many sources mention this possibility. I read in the *National Post* that Russia had admitted that a number of tactical nuclear weapons, weighing about 30 kg, were missing. The same article mentioned that the U.S. was considering using nuclear bombs. *Time* magazine a week or so ago reported that Osama bin Laden had shopped for nuclear weapons and that he could possess a so-called "dirty" bomb which requires no special skill to build. They may not kill as many people as a "clean" atomic device, but the terror factor is identical.

SO, ARE WE ON THE verge of a new era? Will the eleventh cut in interest rates by Greenspan do the trick? The first ten have not had any effect so far. Will we go the way of Japan, where the cost of money is exactly zero but where deflation and shrinking production has been the scourge throughout the last decade?

I think that the promises of a new economic boom are totally premature. It could well be that as workers lose their jobs, as buying power diminishes, resulting in more unemployment, we will see a downward societal spiral that slowly but surely will choke off the prosperity we have enjoyed at the expense of 80 per cent of the world's people and the earth's resources.

Bert Hielema lives and reflects on world events in Tweed, Ont.



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<p>Birth</p>  <p>HAKLANDER: Rick & Marya (nee Bootsma) thank the Lord for granting them a baby boy</p> <p>Seth Richard born on October 30, 2001. Seth is welcomed by siblings Reuben and Kezia. He is the tenth grandchild for Ted & Corrie Bootsma of Georgetown, Ont. and ninth grandchild for Bill & Marja Haklander of Denfield, Ont. Home address: P.O. Box 353, Komoka, ON N0L 1R0</p>	<p>Anniversaries</p> <p>1956 November 14 2001 With thanksgiving to God for his faithfulness, we wish to announce the 45th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents</p> <p>ANDY and JANE BROUWER (nee De Jong) Thanks, Mom and Dad, for the example of Christian love you have shown to each other and also to us over these many years. We see the precious gift God has given you in each other. May you have many more years together! Love always, Gary & Leona Brouwer Tara, Jeff, Tim Caroline & Ed Dyk Caitlin, Travis, Justine Winnifred & Bernie Wiebenga Alex, Matt, Sara Ken & Sherri Brouwer Home address: 25 Wilhelmina Ave., RR 2, Newmarket, ON L3Y 4V9</p>	<p>Obituary</p> <p>Scheveningen Brampton the Neth. Ontario October 26, 1908 - October 30, 2001 "Do not be terrified, do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go." (Josh 1:9b) Surrounded by his children, having lived a full life, the Lord took our father, grandfather and great-grandfather to himself just after his 93rd birthday.</p> <p>JOHANNES ALBLAS Beloved husband of the late Maria (van den Assem) Alblas (April 15, 1994). Dear father of: Margaret & Jan Jansma — Port Alberni, B.C. Tony & Tena Alblas — Brockville, Ont. Tineke Alblas — Badhoevedorp, the Neth. Jeanne & Markus Lise — Newcastle, Ont. Clarence & Pat Alblas — Brampton, Ont. Loved Opa of 15 grandchildren and 29 great-grandchildren. Dear brother of Gre Lievaart of Naaldwijk, the Neth. Predeceased by four brothers and two sisters. Interment was at Woodlawn Cemetery in Guelph, Ont. Memorial service was held on November 3 at Holland Christian Homes, Brampton, Pastors Peter VanEgmond and Markus Lise officiating. "To God be the Glory." Correspondence address: Mrs. Margaret Jansma, 6195 Georgia Rd., Site 149C6, Port Alberni, BC V9Y 7L5</p>	<p>Obituaries</p> <p>Schraard, Fr. Peterborough, Ont. the Neth. Canada Oct. 5, 1911 - Oct. 25, 2001 On October 25, 2001, after a long illness, at the Peterborough Regional Health Centre, the Lord took home our father, grandfather and great-grandfather</p> <p>DAN BUWALDA in his 91st year Beloved husband of the late Tjetje and predeceased by son Anne and grandson Paul. Loving father of: Susan & Ted Radema — Midland, Ont. Willem (Bill) & Margareth Buwalda — Omemee, Ont. Gerald & Lois Buwalda — Dunnville, Ont. Rike & Thijs Van Der Veen — London, Ont. Anna & Pieter Stel — Coquitlam, B.C. Donald & Jessie Buwalda — Ottawa, Ont. Thea & John Patterson — Hong Kong Andrew & Joey Buwalda — Whitby, Ont. Tessa & Richard Tjoelker — Strathroy, Ont. Frank & Ypie Buwalda — Iroquois, Ont. Dear grandfather of 31 grandchildren and 27 great-grandchildren. A funeral service was held on October 30, 2001, at the Cephas Christian Reformed Church, Peterborough, with Pastor William Koopmans officiating. Donations in Dan's memory may be made to the C.R.W.R.C. "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth." (3 John 4)</p> <p>Correspondence address: Wm. Buwalda, 649 Sturgeon Rd., Omemee, ON K0L 2W0</p>
	<p>1956 November 30 2001 With thankfulness to God</p> <p>HARRY and DEET NEUTEL hope to celebrate their 45th wedding anniversary with an Open House on Saturday, December 8, 2001. We invite you to join us and celebrate with us and our family from 2 - 4 p.m. at our home. 692 County Rd. 22 (Centreton Rd.), RR 2, Baltimore ON K0K 1C0</p>	<p>PICTURE THIS! You can advertise in <i>Christian Courier's</i> Business and Service Directory once a month for only: \$25.00 + GST</p>	<p>Congratulations to Arend & Nancy Jagt on their 60th wedding anniversary.</p> <p>Obituaries</p> <p>The Hague Barrie, Ont. the Neth. Canada Dec. 29, 1927 - Oct. 22, 2001 "Be at rest once more, O my soul. For the Lord has been good to you." (Psalm 116:7) After a short battle with cancer, our dear husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather</p> <p>JACOBUS (KOOS) HUIBREGT CHRISTIAANSE was called home to be with his Lord and Saviour. Beloved husband of Julie Christiaan (nee Bijma). Loving father of Menna & Peter Friend — Shelburne, Ont. John & Cori Christiaan — Frankford, Ont. Jennifer & Neil Jansen VanDoorn — South Junction, Man. Trixie Christiaan — Toronto, Ont. Much loved Grandpa of 10 grandchildren and one great-granddaughter. Predeceased by his first wife Maria De Vries in 1966. Survived by his 5 brothers and sisters, all of the Netherlands. The funeral service was held on October 24, 2001 at First Christian Reformed Church, Barrie, with Rev. M. Winnowski of Waterloo officiating. Correspondence address: J. Christiaan, Tollendale Village, Unit G15, 271 Tollendale Mill Rd.,</p> <p>Call Christian Courier today to place your family ad: 1-800-969-4838. Placing an ad this size will only cost \$16 plus GST.</p>

Classifieds

Obituary	Obituary	Job Opportunities
<p>JOHN VANDERLINDE (Jr.) of Sarnia May 20, 1933 - October 3, 2001 After battling cancer for several years, our dear brother and uncle, John, was peacefully taken home by his Lord. We commend his wife Mae (Coomans), daughter Marion, son Jim & Julie Anne and 3 grandchildren, to God's loving care and comfort. Sisters Lammy & Harry Joosse — Sarnia Marion & Sjoerd VanWyk — Clinton Jeanette & George Antonides — Putham also several nieces and nephews. What Cancer Can't Do Cancer is so limited... It cannot cripple love, It cannot shatter hope, It cannot corrode faith, It cannot eat away peace, It cannot destroy confidence, It cannot kill friendship, It cannot shut out memories, It cannot silence courage, It cannot invade the soul, It cannot reduce eternal life, It cannot quench the Spirit, It cannot lessen the power of the resurrection. (Dan Richardson)</p>	<p>Nijkerk, the Neth. Osgoode, Ont. January 18, 1930 - November 9, 2001. "Keep your windows open to Jerusalem." Daniel 6:10 My dear husband, our Dad, & Opa RANGER DEVRIES peacefully, left his earthly home, surrounded by his loving family, to live with his Lord and Saviour in His heavenly home on Friday, Nov. 9, 2001. He was the beloved husband for 41 years of Jane Devries (Staal), and the loving Dad of: Rita & Mike Heuvig — Osgoode, Ont. Jeannette & John Devries — Williamsburg, Ont. and dear Opa of: Jonathan, Jessica, Randy, & Erica Heuvig, Jennifer, Henri, Ryan, Marilee & Nicole Devries Ranger was a dear brother, brother-in-law and uncle to many. He also leaves behind a caring church family. The funeral service was held on November 12th, 2001 at the First Christian Reformed Church of Kemptville, Ontario, pastors Malcolm Caldwell and Ben Ponsen officiating. Correspondence address: Jane Devries, 3939 4th Line Rd., RR # 2, Osgoode, ON KOA 2W0</p>	<p>Christian social action in action Christian Labour Association of Canada (CLAC) is a growing alternative trade union based on Christian principles and currently represents over 25,000 members. We have an ongoing need for front-line trade union representatives, specifically at this time in Edmonton and Calgary, AB., and possibly in another location. Applications are sought for: Staff Representative CLAC provides an extended period of orientation and in-service training for this challenging position. The responsibilities of a Representative cover the entire range of labour relations work. This includes organizing workers into bargaining units; negotiating collective agreements on behalf of members; working with members and employers to resolve grievances and encourage partnership in the workplace; and representing CLAC in various settings as called upon. Successful candidates will have proven people skills, possess superior communications ability, and be able to deal appropriately and effectively with conflict. An understanding of Christian principles and their implications for the workplace is a requirement. Post-secondary education, workplace experience, and analytical/legal aptitudes are desirable. Respond in confidence by January 4, 2002 with a cover letter, resume, and references to Ed Grootenboer, CLAC Executive Director, 5920 Atlantic Drive, Mississauga, Ontario L4W 1N6. Tel (905)670-7383; Fax (905)670-8416; egrootenboer@clac.ca. Successful applicants will be required to sign CLAC's Code of Conduct as a condition of employment. All applications will be held in confidence. CLAC provides a competitive salary and excellent benefits.</p>
<p>Wanted to Rent We would like to rent a park trailer, preferably in clean condition, on the Gulf side of Florida during the months of February and March. Please call: 905-689-1588</p>	<p>Church News Any student from Classis Chatham who has applied to Calvin Seminary or its S.P.M.C. Program for the purpose of full-time ministry in the CRC and who is in need of financial assistance for the coming academic year, is asked to request application forms from Rev. Michael Bootsma, R.R.#2, Blenheim, Ontario N0P 1A0. The completed application forms must be received no later than March 1, 2002 in order for the application to be processed. First time applicants should reserve the evening of March 28/02 for an interview with the Committee.</p>	<p>Timothy Christian School (Rexdale) has a definite opening for PRINCIPAL beginning the 2002 - 2003 school year. Our school of 200 students and thirteen staff was established in 1958 and is situated in a northwest suburb of Toronto, known as Rexdale. If you are a Christian educator who has an active membership in a reformed church interested in leading a dedicated staff, we invite you to apply for this position. We look forward to assisting you use your talents and gifts in our school to help prepare God's children for service in His kingdom. Please send resumes (including references), a statement of faith and a brief philosophy of education to: Timothy Christian School Attn: Principal Search Committee 28 Elmhurst Drive, Rexdale ON M9W 2J5 If you wish to know more about this position please feel free to direct inquiries to Mr. William Groot 416-743-2554</p>
<p>Teachers LONDON, ONT.: London District Christian Secondary School is in need of a full-time teacher for its second semester (February 4 - June 28, 2002). This position entails teaching a Grade 11/12 college preparation English course and two sections of a Grade 11 introduction to Marketing course. Interested applicants are asked to submit a letter of application, statement of faith, and resume by November 30, 2001. Contact: Henry Kooy, Principal London District Christian Secondary School 24 Braesyde Ave., London, ON N5W 1V3 e-mail: office@ldcss.on.ca Telephone: 519-455-4360 Fax: 519-455-4364</p>	<p>The Board of Trustees of the Christian Reformed Church in North America previously placed an advertisement in this publication soliciting information to allow the Board of Trustees to respond to allegations of sexual abuse at an overseas missionary boarding school which allegedly occurred during the 1970s. The Board of Trustees appointed a committee to investigate the matter earlier this year. This committee was unable to substantiate the specific complaints presented, and has concluded its investigation. The Board of Trustees wishes to express its appreciation to all who cooperated in the investigation.</p>	<p>JUBILEE FELLOWSHIP CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH in St.Catharines, Ontario is seeking to fill an exciting, new full-time position for DIRECTOR OF MINISTRIES This director, either male or female, will develop and coordinate activities in accordance with Jubilee's Concept of Ministry, particularly in the areas of Youth, Adult Education, Outreach and Small Group Ministries. For more information or to apply in confidence, please contact: Mr.Theo Meester, c/o Jubilee Fellowship CRC 13 Wilholme Dr., R.R. 3, St.Catharines, ON L2R 6P9 or tmeester@vaxxine.com Applications must be received by December 31, 2001</p>
<p>Church News Classis Chatham of the Christian Reformed Church will meet in regular session D.V. Tuesday, January 29, 2002, in the Second CRC of Sarnia. All materials for the Agenda must be in the office of the Stated Clerk by Monday, December 17, 2001. Jack Herder, Stated Clerk.</p>	<p>Call Christian Courier to-day to place your family ad: 1-800-969-4838.</p>	<p>Send your anniversary, birthday and other important family notices to: Christian Courier at fax #: 905-682-8313 or by e-mail to: ccadpromo@aol.com</p>
<p>Miscellaneous GRONINGERS: Did you know there is a web-site for you? Check out: dideldom.com</p>		

PICTURE THIS!



You can advertise in **Christian Courier's Business and Service Directory** once a month for only: **\$25.00 + GST**

Event

Inglewood CRC
(formerly Thrd CRC)
of Edmonton, Alberta
will be celebrating its
50th anniversary
on **February 22-24, 2002 D.V.**
Join us for **Friday** family night, a commemorative banquet on **Saturday** evening, a celebration worship service on **Sunday** morning at 10:00 a.m. and followed by an organ concert/hymn sing at 4:00 p.m. All former members and friends are invited to attend.
For banquet reservations and more information please call
Coby Benoit at 708-451-5290
or
e-mail:
cbenoit@powersurfr.com



Miscellaneous

The Living Word
Sermons for reading services.
Contact:
CRC
R. Vander Ploeg, Sec./Treas.
37 Brick Pond Lane
Woodstock, ON N4V 1G1
Phone: (519) 539-2117

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Classifieds

Volunteers	Job Opportunities	Miscellaneous
<p>YOUR INVITATION TO GUAM: Short and long term volunteer positions in accounting, teaching and skilled construction are available in Guam beginning January 2002. If you feel God's calling in any of these areas, please call your ServiceLink Office for an information package. In Canada, contact Carol Sybenga at 1-800-730-3490 or sybengac@crcna.org and in the U.S., contact Ruth Buntin at 1-800-552-7972 or buntinr@crcna.org.</p>	<p>Ottawa Christian School is accepting applications for the position of PRINCIPAL. OCS is an interdenominational, JK to Grade 8 community of 230 students, and growing! The candidate should have strong administrative skills and a willingness to work alongside the Board of Directors in vision-casting. Employment effective Aug. 1, 2002. Application deadline: Dec. 31, 2001. Interested candidates should submit a statement of faith and resume to: Principal Search Committee Website at: www.ocschool.org c/o Lee-Pierre Shirey E-mail: Info@ocschool.org 2191 Benjamin Ave. E-mail or Phone Mr. Shirey: Ottawa, ON K2A 1P6 lpshirey@comnet.ca 819-682-7252</p>	
<p>GUAM WORK TEAMS: Can you sheetrock, frame (steel), insulate, paint or do plumbing? How would you like to spend 3 weeks in Guam using those skills to help in the building of Faith Church? All expenses for this opportunity, except air travel is provided for you. Interested? Then give your ServiceLink Office a call and sign up today! All individuals including couples, church groups, college students, from ages 18 and up are encouraged to apply. This opportunity will not last long. In Canada, contact Carol Sybenga at 1-800-730-3490 or sybengac@crcna.org and in the U.S., contact Ruth Buntin at 1-800-552-7972 or buntinr@crcna.org.</p>	<p>MAPLE </p>	<p>Under Construction!</p> <p><i>Make this your last winter to shovel! Now is your opportunity to select finishes</i></p> <p>The Terrace features:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 & 2 Bedroom suites • up to 1,398 sq. ft. • affordable suites from \$130,900 • 6 Whirlpool appliances • parking, storage locker • access to optional support services • 55 plus Christian community <p><i>Imagine the time and freedom to enjoy!</i></p>
<p>Job Opportunities</p> <p>PASTOR NEEDED Ebenezer Christian Reformed Church of Jarvis, Ont. is currently looking for a part-time associate Pastor. The successful Pastor must enjoy ministering to the elderly. Send inquiries to: Mrs. Harmene Sytsma, R.R. 3, Hagersville, ON N0A 1H0</p>	<p>MAPLE ENGINEERING AND CONSTRUCTION CANADA LTD. is a well-established building and heavy civil construction group with offices across Canada. Due to continued expansion we require a:</p> <p>Sales/Project Director who is an effective self-motivated achiever to promote our extensive experience and abilities in building construction, including Design/Build, Construction Management and traditional Design-Build construction services. The ideal candidate will promote Maple in a professional manner, have experience in meeting revenue and margin objectives, in negotiating large contracts, and in preparing and presenting professional proposals. Construction experience and a post-secondary diploma are essential.</p> <p>Project Manager for our Heavy Civil Division. Experience in building water, wastewater and sewage treatment plants is a requirement. Must have a P.Eng. or CET designation and at least 5 years experience in heavy civil construction.</p> <p>Contracts Specialist (part-time contract basis) with solid knowledge of contract and construction law and the ability to review and input on a wide variety of complex claims and legal issues. Must be a seasoned Professional Engineer with many years of experience in Construction / Project Management in both the Commercial Buildings sector and Heavy Civil construction.</p>	<p>Open House Mondays 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Mountainview CRC, 290 Main St. E., Grimsby Call 905.309.7888 today for details</p>
<p>Jarvis Christian Reformed Church is in need of a CARETAKER to start immediately. Benefit package and house available. Please send resume and/or inquires to: Ebenezer CRC, Attention: Mr. John Kloet Jr. Box 239, Jarvis ON N0A 1J0 For more info, call John Kloet at: 519-587-4046.</p>	<p>Manager, Maple Reinders Environmental to market, supervise, and develop the Division. The Division serves industry and the community with environmental site assessments, decommissioning projects, ground water assessments, geotechnical investigation, site testing for subsurface material, etc. The person will be a P.Eng. or equivalent with background in geotechnical engineering or experience in environmental issues.</p> <p>Send resumes in confidence to: raye@maple.ca Fax: 905-457-2498</p>	<p>Low interest rates getting you down? If you are over 65, have you considered the attractive rates, tremendous tax savings, and support of your favourite charities with a gift annuity? Sample rates: Male 70 7.2% totally tax free! for life! Male 80 10% tax free for life and a small one-time tax receipt. Female rates somewhat lower. Joint rates for two persons available. Link Charity Canada, a newcomer, is sponsored by Partners International, Voice of the Martyrs, In Touch Ministries, Operation Eyesight and Emmanuel International. Write, call or fax for a confidential and no-obligation quotation. Phone 416-410-4244, Fax 416-465-6367 45 Harriet St. Toronto M4L 2G1</p>
<p>For Sale</p> <p>Winter is coming. Time to buy or give a good book. Why not: WHERE WAS GOD? (Lives and thoughts of World War II and Holocaust survivors) written and edited by Remkes Kooistra. Just send your cheque or money order for \$20 plus \$2 (freight) to: Dr. Rem Kooistra H 404 - 7900 McLaughlin Rd.S Brampton, ON L6Y 5A7 Has your church library purchased this book?</p>		<p>Food..? For Thought..??</p> <p>When we are down in the dumps, what we need <u>least</u> is <u>criticism</u>. What we need <u>most</u> is a warm, listening ear, consistent, caring, unconditional acceptance, and Christ-like love.</p> <p>Self-discovery of Imprisoned Persons Casey Vander Stelt 'Born From Experience' (905) 385-9261</p>

Events/Advertising

Calendar of Events

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is \$7.50 per line, or \$1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion.

- Nov. 24 Liberation Choir, London, Ont. 8 p.m., St. Paul's Cathedral, 472 Richmond St. Information for all Liberation Choir concerts: 905-457-2348
- Nov. 24-25 Stratford CRC Celebrating 50 years of God's faithfulness. Info 519-393-6116; stratfordcra@quadro.net
- Nov. 27-Dec. 1 Main Stage Play "Twelfth Night", Redeemer Univ. College, Ancaster, For info.: 905-648-2131, ext. 4211
- Nov. 29-30 2001 CFFO Annual Convention, Holiday Inn, Cambridge, Ont. Registr.: 519-837-1620; fax 519-824-1835
- Dec. 7 Christmas Concert "Magnificat" Redeemer Concert Choir & Alumni Choir. Tickets \$16. Stu/Sen. \$14.
- Dec. 8 Mountainview concert, Grimsby. André Knevel, organ, flute, Stephanie Scholman, violin, Hosanna Choir.
- Dec. 15 Can. Chr. Education Foundation. Repeat performance VISION TV broadcasting. See ad in this issue
- 2002
- Jan. 19 Concert St. Thomas "Crescendo" Male Choir, Covenant CRC St. Catharines, 7:30 p.m. Free will offering. For info. call 519-637-4357
- Feb. 22-24 50th Anniversary Inglewood CRC, Edmonton, Alta. Friday Family Night, Saturday evening Banquet, Sunday 10 a.m. Celebration Worship Service; 4 p.m. organ concert/Hymn Sing. See ad in this issue.
- April 21 Calgary 1st CRC 50th Anniv. Former members welcome. For info. 403-243-2244 celebr8fifty@aol.com

Winter Driving Tip:

Keep your fuel line ice-free

(NC)—Everyone's nightmare in the dead of winter is a car engine that grinds and wheezes - but doesn't fire. It is likely gasoline freeze-up and is one of the most frustrating problems, when we expect the car to do its job properly and reliably. Gasoline freeze can be easily avoided however since there are many products available to beat the problem. According to industry specialists at Prestone, the fuel additive called Gas Treatment is a multi-purpose product that "demonstrates

superior ability to fight gasoline freeze and at the same time improve performance by cleaning the fuel injectors and carburetors." If you anticipate extra harsh weather conditions, consider Cold Start, a fuel additive specially-formulated for the lengthy Canadian deep-freeze. More information on winter car care is available on-line at www.prestone.com, or toll-free (800) 333-1106.

- News Canada

FROM COAST TO COAST

English Radio:
Back to God Hour

THE BACK TO GOD HOUR

Television:
Primary Focus

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Burns Lake - CFLO 9:15 am 1400
Osoyoos - CJOR 8:00 am 1490
Penticton - CKOR 8:00 am 800
Port Alberni - CJAV 7:00 pm 1240
Prince George - CIRX 7:00 am 94.3
Princeton - CHOR 8:00 am 1400
Smithers - CFBV 9:15 am 1230
Summerland - CHOR 8:00 am 1450
Vernon - CJIB 9:30 pm 940

ALBERTA

Brooks - CIBQ 8:00 am 1340
Ft. McMurray - CJOK 8:30 am 1230
High River - CHRB 6:30 pm 1140
Edmonton - CJCA 6:00 pm 930
Westlock - CFOK 7:30 am 1370

SASKATCHEWAN

Estevan - CJSJ 8:00 am 1280
Weyburn - CFSL 8:00 am 1190

MANITOBA

Altona - CFAM 9:30 am 950
Steinbach - CHSM 8:00 am 1250
Winnipeg - CKJS 9:00 am 810

ONTARIO

Atikokan - CHAK 9:30 am 1240
Chatham - CFCA 6:30 am 630
Fort Frances - CFOB 9:30 am 640
Guelph - CJOY 8:30 am 1460
Hamilton - CHAM 7:30 am 820
Kapuskasing - CKAP 7:00 am 586

London - CKSL 7:00 am 1410
Newmarket - CKDX 9:00 am 88.5
Oshawa - CKDO 8:00 am 1350
Owen Sound - CFOS 7:00 am 560
Pembroke - CHVR 10:00 am 96.7
Sarnia - CHOK 7:30 am 1070
Stratford - CJCS 8:30 am 1240
Windsor - CKLW 7:30 am 800
Wingham - CKNX 10:30 am 920

NEW BRUNSWICK

Saint John - CHSJ 9:00 am 94.1

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

Charlottetown - CFXY 7:00 am 630

NOVA SCOTIA

Bridgewater - CKBW 7:30 am 100C
Digby - CKDY 6:00 am 1420
Halifax - CFDR 8:30 am 780
Liverpool - CKBW 7:30 am 94.5
Kentville - CKEN 8:30 am 1490
Middleton - CKAD 8:30 am 1350
New Glasgow - CKEC 7:30 am 1320
Shelburne - CKBW 7:30 am 93.1
Sydney - CJCB 7:00 am 1270
Weymouth - CKDY 8:30 am 103.1

Kid's Corner-Radio

Drayton Valley, AB - CIBW 8:30 am-Sunday 92.9fm
Nordegg, AB - CHBW 8:30 am-Sunday 93.9fm
Rocky Mtn. House, AB - CHBW 8:30 am-Sunday 94.5fm
Prince Rupert, BC - CIAJ 10 am-Saturday 100.7fm
Niagara Falls, ON - CJRN 7:30am-Sunday 710am

ALBERTA

Lethbridge - CJIL
Monday - 10:00 pm
Saturday - 3:00 pm
ONTARIO - CTS
Saturday - 7:30 pm

Check your local listings
for cable outlets airing
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PACIFIC - B.C. ... 2 pm &
10 pm Sunday.

MOUNTAIN - AB ... 3 pm &
11 pm

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4 pm Sunday & 12 am Monday

EASTERN - ON & QC ...
5 pm Sunday & 1 am Monday

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for further information contact our Executive Director Fred R. VanderVelde

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2621 Cavendish Drive, Burlington, ON L7P 3W6 Tel: 905-336-5619 • Fax: 905-336-2376

CHRISTMAS ISSUE GREETINGS

Residents of Holland Christian Homes if you would like your wishes included in the Christmas Issue Ad, please send your Name, Apt. Number and Tower along with your cheque of \$8.00 to

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News

Worldwide Christian Schools chooses director of ministry development

CALEDONIA, Ont. — The Board of Worldwide Christian Schools Canada is pleased to announce the appointment of Rev. John Postuma as Director of Ministry Development for Worldwide Christian Schools Canada.

Postuma brings a wide range of experiences to this position. Prior to entering the ministry in the Christian Reformed Church, he taught in two Christian schools in Ontario. For the last 29 years he served four churches in the province: Calvary CRC, Ottawa; Grace CRC, Welland; Bethel CRC, Waterdown; and most recently, Maranatha CRC, York.

In addition to his work in Christian Education and in Christian Ministry, Postuma served as Pastoral Advisor for Diaconal Ministries: for the Deacons of Eastern Canada, for the All Ontario Diaconal Conference, and for the Christian Reformed World Relief

Board in Canada. He also served as the representative of Classis Hamilton to the Board of World Missions.

Helping schools in developing nations

Worldwide Christian Schools is an international, interdenominational Christian ministry that seeks to build Christian schools in developing nations of the Third World and Eastern European countries, to provide teachers' training, to help build school curricula that are culturally appropriate, and to provide school sponsorship.

Postuma's task as Director of Ministry Development will be to preach and to share the Good News of God's Kingdom in churches and communities, to cast a vision across Canada for the establishment of Christian schools in developing nations, and to create a networking of prayer partnership



Rev. John Postuma

for WCS. The ministry includes a call for God's people to use their gifts for service, such as in the HANDS program to participate in

the actual construction of such schools. Financial support through church offerings, school sponsorships and community support will also be encouraged.

In sharing his passion for the Great Commission and the opportunities presented by WCS, Postuma emphatically states, "We have been so blessed in our Reformed Christian community in North America. The benefits of Christian education must be shared with our Christian brothers and sisters, and their children in other parts of the world. Imagine the

impact this will have for God's Kingdom!"

Years of Christian tradition — music and surprise

Marten A. Mol

Roy Thomson Concert Hall in Toronto was again filled to capacity for the 15th year in a row as The Christian Festival Concert Choir and Guest soloists entered the majestic hall. Master of Ceremonies Ken Haslam opened the evening with enthusiasm that this was the

40th year for the Ontario Christian Music Assembly.

Under the direction of Leendert Kooij, A.R.C.T., and the participation of all his seven children and four grandchildren, as well as the well-established long-serving 90 choir members, the opening number began with traditional praises

to the King of Heaven. The ever energetic director and wonderfully gifted arrangements by Leendert Kooij still prevail after more than 40 years of service with music to the Dutch-Canadian Christian community.

Surprise and gift

Then a very special surprise and gift for the evening stepped up to the microphone and captured the hearts of the audience and sounds of Thomson Concert Hall. Lovely soprano, direct from The Netherlands, soloist Margaret Roest, with a full bodied sound and a majestic operatic touch in the Kathleen Ferrier tradition, took over with wonderful pieces from G.F. Handel and other equally wonderful Christian musical pieces. Clearly enjoying the evening she captured the Joy of music that touches the audience year after year.

From Niagara Falls to Bowmanville and Holland Marsh, many buses full of people made their way into their seats to enjoy this evening and they were not disappointed and were touched when the Improvisation by local and international famous organist Andre Knevel took to "Oh Canada" and all stood to sing along from the heart. Returning again was an old friend to the Christian Music Festival, celebrated Dutch Organist and Choir leader Sander van Marion. As always, he performed his traditional piano accompaniment with the Dutch soloist and this year was

blessed with Margaret Roest. Also each year The Kooij sisters perform their traditional numbers but were pleasantly joined by deep based brother Ben Kooij in a change of pace in "This Old House" number that they, too, seemed to enjoy, as well as their audience.

There were many highlights for the evening but audience participation is why many enter the festival and when the roof is lifted by over 3000 thousand voices, all knowing the music and the words, they become special touching moments. There is no question that those within Thomson Concert Hall including the many sponsors are looking forward to next year, as audiences are coming from further distances each year and make a day of it in the heart of the city — Toronto. Every seat has a great view and marvelous sound acoustics to hear the hard working family-based OCMA Euphonia Concert Band. The family affair continues and the excellent Brass Quintet with three daughters and the oldest son that Leendert and Maria Kooij are very proud of, enhances the sound during most choir numbers with clarity and enthusiasm.

Thank you for your excellent traditions of Christian music to honor God each year and hope to see you next year on November 1, 2002 at the famous then fully-renewed Thomson Concert Hall.

News Digest

Dog wears contact lenses

MANCHESTER, England (Ananova) — A short-sighted greyhound is now winning races after being fitted with contact lenses. The dog once lost every race because it would stay behind the leader to avoid getting lost. Since getting lenses, it is racing to victory after victory.

Its owner doesn't want the dog's name revealed, because bookies will slash the odds.

The dog was treated by leading British animal eye specialist, Pip Boydell, at the Animal Medical Referral Centre in Manchester. Diagnosis showed the dog had a vision problem, so special lenses were made and fitted, reports Britain's *The Sun*. Boydell revealed the cure during a lecture on animal eye problems at Manchester University.

"The greyhound was severely short-sighted and always came second because it followed the dog in front," she said. "With the lenses, it could see the hare and begin to win."

Cheesy artwork

POWELL, Wyoming — Cosimo Cavallaro's latest artwork will involve enough cheese to blanket a house. The New York artist began spraying hot pepperjack cheese in the bedroom of a home in this Wyoming town in October. By the time he's done, 5,400 kg of cheese will cover the house, inside and out. Welcome to the Wyoming Cheese House.

Sharon Earhart, director of the Powell Chamber of Commerce, sees the project as fun, and reason enough for a parade. She was involved with the town's Cheesefest, Oct. 27, which featured a parade and a cheese king and queen.

The popcorn fork

MENOMENEE FALLS, Wisconsin — A Wisconsin inventor has finally solved a very slippery problem. Don Sothman has invented the popcorn fork.

Several years ago, while eating popcorn at a movie theatre, Sothman was inspired to invent the fork. "Seeing people using loads of napkins, and some even wiping their hands on the seats, sparked the idea," wrote Sothman in a press release. "Think of the millions of hectares of forests we cut down and turn into napkins. Well, now we can all help save the forests."

Sothman reports that 200,000 people have already ordered the forks. He has even traveled to China to promote it.

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